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An Annotated Translation of the Life of St. Thomas Becket By William Fitzstephen: (Part Two)

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AN ANNOTATED TRANSLATION OF THE
LIFE OF ST. THOMAS BECKET
BY WILLIAM FITZSTEPHEN

(Part Two)

By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of Master
of Arts in Loyola University

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VITA

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INTRODUCTION

St. Thomas of Canterbury has been a favorite subject of biographers, of panegyrists and of hostile critics during the several centuries that have elapsed since his martyrdom. His own strong, unyielding character, the nature of the cause which he so staunchly upheld, and the brutal death meted out to him in the precincts of his own cathedral, all combined to arouse the interest and, for the most part, the unbounded admiration of his contemporaries. This interest has never flagged, but has inspired a good deal of literature, some loyal and admiring, some hostile and disparaging, as the circumstances and prejudices of the writers dictated.

The original sources for the life of St. Thomas have been collected and edited by James Craigie Robertson in seven volumes, entitled Materials for the History of Thomas Becket¹. These volumes are part of a larger series, known as the Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores or Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages, or, as it is popularly called, the Rolls Series. The series has been issued in accordance with a plan submitted to the English Treasury in 1857 by the Master of the Rolls, for the publication of materials for the history of England from the invasion of the Romans to the reign of Henry VIII.

¹ Published by Longman, Trübner, etc., London. 1875-1877.

The materials for the life of St. Thomas are exceptionally abundant and remarkably trustworthy and well preserved. They issue from the pen of writers who were contemporaries of the Saint, who were eyewitnesses themselves of much of what they set down, or received their information from those who had witnessed the events recorded. The substantial agreement of many of these biographers, and the fact that their writings were published at a time when the memory of St. Thomas's life and martyrdom was still fresh in the minds of the faithful are further guarantees of their accuracy and fidelity.

Among the original sources are the letters, collected in volumes V, VI, VII of the Materials for the History of Thomas Becket. There are also several contemporary lives by the following authors:

Garnier de Pont S. Maxence, who wrote a metrical French composition, edited by Hippeau, Paris, 1859;

John of Salisbury, one of the most eminent scholars of the age, and an intimate friend of St. Thomas; he is presumed to have written his brief sketch before 1176, the year in which he became Bishop of Chartres;

Alan of Tewkesbury, whose life, intended to supplement the short work of John of Salisbury, was prefixed to a volume of the Archbishop's correspondence which Alan collected and published;

Benedict, Prior of Christ Church, Canterbury, later Abbot of Peterborough, whose account of the martyrdom exists only in

fragments in the Quadrilogus; he wrote also a book on the miracles of the Saint;

Edward Grim, a secular cleric, English by birth, whose life was probably written about 1177;

Herbert of Bosham, another intimate friend and trusted confidant of St. Thomas, who wrote a valuable but extremely prolific life, begun 1184 and finished sometime after 1189;

William of Canterbury, who wrote a book of miracles and a biography in which some passages are directly copied from John of Salisbury;

William Fitzstephen, of whom more will be said later;

Anonymous I, formerly, but without sufficient evidence, called Roger of Pontigny; and

Anonymous II, sometimes styled Lambethiensis, because the life was found in manuscript in the library of Lambeth.

In addition the contemporary chroniclers, such as William of Newburgh, Ralph de Diceto, Gervase of Canterbury, and Roger of Hovedon, supply some valuable information. Finally, mention must be made of the Icelandic Thomas Saga Erkebyskup, edited by Mr. Magnusson in the Rella Series. The Thomas Saga is a fourteenth century compilation based on earlier materials, especially two twelfth century lives, now lost, by Benedict of Peterborough and Robert of Cricklade. There also appeared in the 12th and 14th centuries two compilations, known as the First and Second Quadrilogus, made up of extracts from earlier

lives.

The modern biographies of St. Thomas Becket are numerous. Without doubt, the best English life is The Life and Martyrdom of St. Thomas Becket, (2nd ed., London, 1885) by John Morris, S. J. The biography by the Anglican J. C. Robertson, Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1859, is decidedly unsympathetic and unfavorable in the portrait it paints of the martyred Archbishop. The short sketch in the Dictionary of National Biography, Thomas, known as Thomas Becket, by Kate Norgate is excellent. It includes a fairly complete bibliography of the abundant literature dealing with the life of St. Thomas as a whole or with special phases, as well as a list of the original sources.

One of the most valuable of the contemporary lives is that by William Fitzstephen². It is written in an interesting and lively fashion and is the main authority for the Archbishop's early life. In the estimation of William R. Hutton, it is perhaps the best of all the lives. Fitzstephen, he says, "stands out clearly before us and he writes boldly as a man of affairs, for the men who can understand the great work that falls on statesmen and bishops³". The life is prefaced by an interesting and highly enthusiastic description of the city of London.

2 Contained in volume III of Materials for the History of Thomas Becket.

3 Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, Cambridge at the University Press, 1926. p. 294.

This is the most graphic and elaborate account of London during the twelfth century and has been printed separately in several editions.

The life can be divided into two sections, the first of which describes the early life of St. Thomas, his chancellorship, his elevation to the Archiepiscopal See of Canterbury, his conflict with Henry at Clarendon and Northampton, and his flight from England. It ends with a long rhymed prayer, composed by Fitzstephen and presented to King Henry. This so pleased the King that its author alone among the associates of the Archbishop was not forced to go into exile. This first half of the Life has been ably translated by the Reverend Leo T. Gourde, O. S. B.

The second half of the life, offered in the present translation, is concerned with the last years of St. Thomas, from A. D. 1165, the first year of his exile, to the year of his death in A. D. 1170. Without too much regard for chronological order, Fitzstephen records the main events of the Archbishop's exile. He enumerates briefly the various conferences held to arrange for peace between Henry and the Archbishop, and describes the final reconciliation followed by St. Thomas's return to Canterbury. His description of the last days of the martyr and the swiftly moving events that culminated in the martyrdom is particularly outstanding, for Fitzstephen himself was an eyewitness of what he recounted. Then the biography

concludes with a brief record of some of the early miracles of the martyred Archbishop and a rather long drawn out dissertation on the virtues of the martyr as well as the malice and perversity of his assassins.

Of the life of William Fitzstephen himself little is known with certainty except what he tells us within the pages of his biography of St. Thomas. He claims to be a fellow citizen of the Archbishop and to have performed various services for his patron, such as those of remembrancer in his chancery, of subdeacon at Mass in his chapel, of a reader of documents in his court; and at times he acted as advocate in the archiepiscopal court. He mentions too that he was in attendance on the Archbishop at the Council of Northampton, in the course of which he remonstrated against the violent advice offered by Herbert of Bosham. Although not exiled with the other followers of the Archbishop, he visited his master during the exile at Fleury on the Loire, and he reminded him of a sign which had passed between them at Northampton when, the King's officers forbidding him to speak, Fitzstephen had pointed in eloquent silence to his crucifix. From his own statements we know that he was in the company of the Archbishop during the stormy interview with the knights, and that he, along with Robert of Merton and Edward Grim, remained with the martyr until the end, though the rest of the clerics and the monks who were present fled in terror.

As there seems to be no reason for doubting the genuineness of Fitzstephen's book, especially as the manuscripts of it date back almost to the time claimed for its composition, we can accept as true all that he tells us of his association with the Archbishop and of his presence at St. Thomas's side on several important occasions. Hence, it is all the more striking and puzzling that neither Fitzstephen himself nor his book received any mention whatsoever from the contemporary writers. Moreover, Herbert of Bosham, who professes to list and describe all the learned followers of St. Thomas in his Catalogus Eruditorum, makes no mention of William Fitzstephen who was certainly closer to the Archbishop than several of those whom Herbert does include in his list.

Various explanations have been offered for this strange silence. Mr. E. Magnusson, in the preface to his edition of the Thomas Saga Erkiþyskup⁴, thinks that possibly Fitzstephen's life, although written among the first, was not published until after the death of Henry II, of whom, in Mr. Magnusson's opinion, he speaks with considerable severity. Although this theory would satisfactorily explain the silence of the other writers about Fitzstephen's book, it does not explain their failure to mention the man himself⁵.

4 Quoted by John Morris, S. J., The Life and Martyrdom of St. Thomas Becket², London, Burns and Oates, 1885, Introduction p. xvi.

5 Morris, p. xvii.

Canon Robertson believes that "an explanation may be found in the conjecture that Fitzstephen may have offended the Archbishop's more thorough-going partisans by conduct which they regarded as unfaithful to the cause of the church⁶". His book reveals him to be a man of the world who could tell the points of a horse and who possessed a keen interest in the splendor and enjoyments of this world. One example of this is his description of the three noble chargers which the Archbishop on his return from exile intended to present to the young King. In general he seems to take a less religious and monastic view of things than Herbert of Bosham, Benedict, William and the other writers. He tells us himself, as we have seen, that when Herbert advised the Archbishop at Northampton to excommunicate anyone that might lay hands on him, Fitzstephen dissuaded his patron from following this advice. It may well be, therefore, that there was little friendly feeling between him and his fellow clerics, John of Salisbury, in particular, for he singles him out for unfavorable mention, tacitly contrasting his flight with the courage of the few⁷. After the flight of the Archbishop, Fitzstephen was the only one of his associates who was not sent into exile as he had made his peace by presenting Henry with a lengthy rhymed prayer. This course shows no great

6 Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, volume III, Introduction, p. xiv.

7 E. H. Abbott, St. Thomas of Canterbury, His Death and Miracles, London, Adam and Charles Black, 1898, p. 12.

zeal for the cause of the church, and the exiles may naturally have felt bitter against the man who could keep on terms with both their banisher and their leader. Mr. Robertson conjectures that the visit to Rome which afforded Fitzstephen an opportunity of visiting his former patron at Fleury may have been one which he made as an envoy sent by Henry to the Pope.

These considerations incline Mr. Robertson to agree with Mr. Foss⁸ who identifies this William Fitzstephen, author of The Life and Passion of St. Thomas Becket, with a sheriff of Gloucester of the same name. The latter filled the office of Sheriff of Gloucester with his brother Ralph during the years 1171 to 1190. In 1176, he was placed by Henry II as a justice itinerant at the head of one of the six circuits then arranged by the Council of Northampton.

While Mr. Foss admits that there is no positive evidence to support the argument, there are many grounds for identifying William Fitzstephen the Sheriff and Justiciar, with William Fitzstephen the author. The information which the latter gives of himself and his training makes it clear that he would have been well suited for judicial employment. It seems probable that during his patron's chancellorship, he held some office in the Chancery or Exchequer, an office which he may well have continued to hold even after St. Thomas resigned the Chancellorship.

⁸ Judges of England, volume II, pp. 371-373.

We have already seen that Fitzstephen alone escaped the sentence of banishment inflicted on the Archbishop's followers. While Fitzstephen himself attributes this to the Latin prayer which he composed for the King, possibly the fact of his being a useful official of the court may have had something to do with it.

The fact of Fitzstephen's presence at Canterbury at the time of the Archbishop's murder does not, in Mr. Foss's estimation, offer any objection to his theory that Fitzstephen was an official of the King's court. Nominally at least the King and Archbishop were reconciled and it was a proper act of respect for Fitzstephen to visit his patron on his return from exile. After the martyrdom of St. Thomas there would be no reason for the King to deprive himself of Fitzstephen's services, since the latter had never made himself personally objectionable and the King would no doubt be anxious to avoid any act that might appear to be a punishment of the martyred Archbishop's friends. Therefore the nomination of William Fitzstephen as Sheriff of Gloucestershire in A. D. 1171 is not surprising, and the same reasons would account for his selection as one of the justiciars in A. D. 1176. Mr. Foss notes also that the termination of the sheriffalty and the last acts of the justiciar both occur about 1190 or 1191, the period assigned for the death of the biographer.

In connection with the death of William Fitzstephen, John

Stow in A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster⁹ remarks that William Fitzstephen "lived in the reign of King Stephen, wrote in the reign of Henry the Second, and deceased in the year of Christ 1191 in the reign of Richard the First". What basis there is for placing his death in 1191 is not stated, but that was evidently the traditional date assigned to it.

Most editors agree that the Life and Passion of St. Thomas by William Fitzstephen was written not long after the death of the Archbishop, probably before the year 1177. When speaking of the miracles of St. Thomas, Fitzstephen mentions one book of miracles as having been already written; he is evidently referring to the volume by Benedict who was assigned to write an account of the miracles at the tomb of the martyred Archbishop very shortly after his death. However in A. D. 1172 William of Canterbury began a second book of miracles, published in A. D. 1177, of which Fitzstephen apparently knows nothing. It seems likely then that his biography was written either before William of Canterbury began his work or at least before he had made much progress with it.

At times Fitzstephen's style is overly rhetorical and somewhat tedious because of its wordiness and numerous repetitions, but generally speaking it is clear and forceful. His broad acquaintance with the classics, a characteristic of the

9 Edited by John Strype, London, 1720, Appendix I, p. 9.

literary men of his day, is evident from his many quotations from a wide range of classical sources. That his work should abound in scriptural allusions is, of course, no more than one would expect of a writer of that age.

In spite of the silence of Fitzstephen's contemporaries about his book and about Fitzstephen himself, a silence which cannot be accounted for in an entirely satisfactory manner, no one doubts the genuineness of his biography. To quote W. R. Hutton¹⁰,

...The book itself is his passport to fame. It shows him a man of the world who can note the humours of travel and the strange tricks of self-assertive men. Every descriptive touch of the Archbishop shows a knowledge as intimate as the power of observation is exact. No biographer tells us more certainly what really happened and how it happened, or sees with more sure insight the thoughts which move men to their words and deeds.

¹⁰ Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, p. 295.

A CONTINUATION OF THE LIFE AND PASSION OF

ST. THOMAS BECKET, ARCHBISHOP AND MARTYR

BY WILLIAM FITZSTEPHEN

The first year¹ of Thomas's exile had by now nearly drawn to its close. Since the anger of the King² ought to have abated, the good Archbishop wrote him those letters of exhortation which begin, "With desire, I have desired...etc."³

Some devout men of France interceded in behalf of the Archbishop with the English King, who had returned into Normandy and the neighboring regions; but they found him inexorable. The Archbishop wrote numerous letters to his fellow bishops, sometimes to all jointly, occasionally to each one separately, encouraging them to resume again the spirit of the Lord, and, having cast aside all earthly fear, to place themselves as a bulwark before the house of God. Gilbert of London⁴ answered

1 A. D. 1165.

2 Henry II (1133-1189) was the son of the Empress Matilda, daughter and heiress of Henry I, and Geoffrey of Anjou. He succeeded to the throne in 1154 at the death of King Stephen who had usurped the throne from its lawful claimant, Matilda. Henry II ruled for thirty-five years and is noted in English history for his judicial and constitutional reforms, as well as for his bitter conflict with the Archbishop Thomas of Canterbury over the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical courts. The struggle ended in the murder of St. Thomas, a disgraceful stain on the reign of this monarch.

3 This letter may be found in Rolls Series, volume II, p. 419. The opening words are from Luke 22.15.

4 Gilbert Foliot, Bishop of Hereford (1148-1163), then Bishop of London (1163-1188), one of the most illustrious of English Bishops, in the struggle between the King and the Archbishop, became a bitter opponent and critic of St. Thomas.

him frequently. He also for that cause wrote very often to the Pope⁵, striving to convince him that royal blood, when it has obtained its end, may then be won over. He endeavored to persuade the Pope to be more favorably disposed toward the King and to refrain from saying anything harsh against the King at the instigation of the Archbishop lest perhaps he and all his lands would join the opposing faction in that widespread schism, with the emperor who was protecting an apostate⁶. Then, if that should happen, the Pope could go completely into mourning, if I may use his expression. Enough men would be found who would receive their churches and the pastoral staffs of the bishops of the English king from the hand and obedience of an idol⁷.

To this same bishop the King had entrusted the revenues of the Archbishop's prescribed clerics and the guardianship of the churches. Although the Bishop could have applied great consolation to very many of these clerics, without fear of punishment,

5 Alexander III (1159-1181).

6 Frederick Barbarossa, elected German King in 1152, was crowned Roman Emperor in 1155 and embarked upon a protracted struggle to assert the superiority of royal over papal power, in the course of which he vigorously supported the cause of the anti-pope, Victor IV, elected by the Synod of Pavia, and his successor, Paschal III, and endeavored to win over to their cause the other rulers of Europe. The schism was ended in 1177 when Frederick, defeated at Legnano, recognized Alexander III as lawful pope.

7 The Anti-pope, Paschal III (1164-1168).

either openly distributing and presenting his own goods, to these poor and destitute clerics, or at least strengthening their spirits under the shelter of his cloak, yet he was neither a Lawrence nor a Sebastian⁸. Robert Uscarl, his cleric, was the official in charge of collecting the revenues of these churches. A clever man, he handed over the churches for the smaller payment, that he might take for himself the larger income from the farms. Hence greater gifts would accrue to him, which would not be given over to the royal treasury. The Archbishop excommunicated all those who, through their own boldness or by the authority of the King, had seized either property of the Church of Canterbury or its churches, or the goods of his clerics. But these men, alas! did not conduct themselves as if excommunicated. Afterwards many of them, such as Robert and Nigel de Sackville, the King's sealbearer, perished in the flower of their youth. Some of those excommunicated by the Archbishop, wounded in their own flesh by a grievous ulcer, breathed their last as if struck by God. Among these were Robert, the vice-archdeacon of Canterbury, and the priest of Throwley⁹.

The Bishop of London, after many reproofs from the Pope, resigned his charge of the churches to the King about the end

⁸ Acts SS. August 10, p. 513, p. 518.

⁹ The text has Chierlewda, probably for Thierlewda, i. e., Throwley near Faversham.

of the year. The Archbishop, I repeat, very zealously encouraged his suffragan bishops by letters, urging them to adhere in union to him and to the mother church of Canterbury lest the King, with their connivance or dissimulation, might fiercely persecute the church of Canterbury and oppress the English clergy with unjust laws.

One day, blessed Thomas, then at Pontigny¹⁰, had celebrated Mass and afterwards was spending some time, as was his custom, prostrate before the altar in prayers, tears, and groans. He heard a voice saying, "O Thomas, Thomas!"

He answered, "O Lord, Who art Thou?"

And the Lord said to him, "I am Jesus Christ, thy Lord and thy Brother. My Church shall be glorified in thy blood, and thou shalt be glorified in Me."

In a little while he rose up and prepared to leave, thinking that he alone had heard the words. Then he saw the abbot of the monastery, who had been in a place hidden from him, standing close by and waiting for him near one of the pillars of the church. When the Archbishop ascertained that the abbot had heard the words, he exacted from him a promise to tell no one while he was yet alive. After the martyrdom of the Archbishop, the abbot revealed this incident.

10 A Cistercian monastery in which St. Thomas, who had retired there after his flight from England, spent about two years.

He also condemned by rescript the Constitutions of Clarendon¹¹, and released all who had agreed to them from the obligation of observing them. The King, vexed by these and similar actions, caused the Archbishop to be removed from Pontigny, as the monks began to fear lest the English King would expel from his territory all the members of their order, who lived in large numbers in his lands, if they kept the Archbishop, the enemy of the King, any longer.

In the chapel of the King, in that festive hymn, Christus Vincit¹², they did not say, archiepiscopo, when they came to that verse, but "archiepiscopus, pax, salus, et vita". Likewise the lord Bishop of London at the solemn prayers after his sermons, either in his synods to the clergy or on feast days to the people, when there was no hope of peace between the King and Archbishop, did not name the latter that a prayer might be offered up to God for him by the church. When there was a rumor of their coming to an agreement then he made a commemoration of the Archbishop. Many heard and made a note of this.

11 The statement of the ancient customs of the English kingdom drawn up at Henry's orders, at the Council of Clarendon, 1164, in the beginning of his struggle with St. Thomas over clerical immunities and ecclesiastical jurisdiction. St. Thomas's refusal to sign these documents increased the king's rage against him.

12 The hymn Christus Vincit, Christus Regnat, sung at the closing of the council called by William, the Conqueror in 1080, and still used at the reception of Archbishops, or Bishops, or other festival occasions. When the form archiepiscopo, dative case, was changed to archiepiscopus, nominative case, the passage ceased to have meaning.

See N. Montani, St. Gregory Hymnal, Philadelphia, St. Gregory Guild, Inc., 1941, pp. 370, 578.

He acted in a similar fashion afterwards. When the two kings of England, father and son, were in agreement, he said in the prayer at Mass¹³, "Grant to our kings..." When they were at odds, he would say, "Grant to our king" (namely the elder, the one in possession of the realm) "wisely to work for the triumph of Thy power". There were never lacking those who frequently noted such things.

Then Louis, the King of France¹⁴, very devout and a man worthy of God, took the Archbishop under his own protection. Indeed he had wished to do this from the beginning and had so offered to Saint Thomas. From the revenues of Sens, he gave the Archbishop for his own use, money, provisions, wine, as much as his servants wished to receive. He paid his respects to him by gifts and presents and also, in his own person. Occasionally he would say to Thomas himself or to his clerics who were expressing their gratitude, "You should not thank me. Never before has it been such a pleasure to me to share my bread with anyone."

13 The prayer, beginning Deus in cujus manus sunt corda Regum, which was later altered into the second collect for the king in the Anglican liturgy: W. Palmer, Origines Liturgicæ³, London, F. and G. Rivington, 1845, volume 2. p. 38.

14 Louis VII, King of France (1137-1180).

William, the Archbishop of Sens¹⁵, also revered the exiled Archbishop with true affection. William, the son of Count Theobald¹⁶ who was nephew of the elder Henry, the King of England, was the brother of a queen and of three French counts. Although a young man, he was older than his years in the dignity of his character. On account of his merits, he had deserved to be entrusted with two noble churches, those of Sens and Chartres. All the clergy and knights of France honored the Archbishop likewise. The latter was residing outside the city at the monastery of St. Columba.

The Pope now began to write very solicitously in his behalf to the King of England, as so much time had elapsed that the King's hatred and indignation, if they were mortal, ought long ago to have expired. After several gentle and persuasive letters of exhortation, he sent messengers. So first by one means and then by the other, he sought to recall the King from his anger. Since there was no response to his knocking, at length he added threats, but moderately, frequently repeating to the King that he had borne with him for a long time, and by his forbearance had called upon him to reform; he could no longer bear with him thus contrary to the salvation of his soul.

15 William of Champagne, Bishop elect of Chartres (1165-1176), Archbishop of Sens (1168-1176), and Archbishop of Rheims (1176-1202).

16 Count Theobald of Champagne and Blois (born about 1090, died 1152) was the son of Adela, daughter of William the Conqueror and sister of Henry I.

In the meanwhile the Pope gave counsel to the Archbishop and granted him the power of punishing his sons who were in rebellion against him. He also honored the Archbishop and raised him to the dignity of legate and primate of England¹⁷, in order that whatever was lacking to him because of the loss of his possessions might be supplied by the acquisition of these dignities. Thus what he had lost in revenues was restored to him in honors.

The Archbishop sent to the Bishop of London the letters of the Pope announcing his appointment as Legate; he also in his capacity of Legate sent letters of his own. Both his own letters and those of the Pope contained instructions that the Bishop of London, as his Dean, should announce to the English Bishops that he, Thomas, was the Legate of the Pope. In addition he sent letters which he wrote himself to each of the bishops. The Bishop of London refused this order of obedience. The Archbishop had once before appealed to this same Bishop. In his letters addressed to him, he admonished him; he even commanded him to come to him and, as his suffragan and as one who

¹⁷ A bull issued probably on April 8, 1166 granted to St. Thomas and his successors in the See of Canterbury the primacy of England. Letters from the Lateran, issued April 24, 1166, made St. Thomas the Pope's Legate over all England save only the diocese of York. See John Morris, S. J., The Life and Martyrdom of St. Thomas Becket² London, Burns and Oates, 1885. Pp. XXXVI, p. 232.

had professed obedience to the Church of Canterbury, to aid him with advice and assistance in the cause of the Church. The bishop refused. Moreover, without the knowledge of the Pope or of the Archbishop, he absolved Alan de Neville¹⁸, who had been excommunicated by Thomas, and who was then on the point of departure for Jerusalem. But nevertheless Alan bound himself by oath to go to the Pope on his journey and to receive from him the release from the penance to be imposed.

Roger, the Bishop of Worcester¹⁹, had been summoned by Thomas. He was determined to follow the Archbishop and to take part in the plans of his father and lord, as well as to be of assistance in the cause of the Church. At one time he had sought and obtained permission to cross the channel, on the plea of continuing his studies, for²⁰ he was still but a young man. While abroad, he passed some time at the court of the King to whom he was closely related. His is the illustrious praise, the glorious renown of being the only one of the English bishops who had the courage to desire to share exile with his exiled father, to endure poverty with his destitute

18 According to Edward Foss, The Judges of England, London, Longman, Brown, Green and Longman, 1848, p. 283, this Alan de Neville, a judge in the King's Court in 1165, and justice of the forests of England for many years, was one of the lords of the council who was excommunicated by the Archbishop because of the vigorous measures he took to support the King against St. Thomas. He died in 1190.

19 Roger Fitzcount, Bishop of Worcester (1164-1179), a grandson of Henry I and first cousin of Henry II.

20 quorum in the text should probably be read as quoniam which the sense of the passage seems to require.

master, to stand firm in behalf of the liberty of the Church, and in the time of darkness and doubt, to resist the King in his errors. He who opposes his friend in error becomes more pleasing when his friend has recovered his senses.

The Archbishop had often corrected his Archdeacon, Geoffrey Ridel²¹, for his disobedience and had given him many warnings. Finally he excommunicated him. He made this fact known to the King who paid no heed to it. Some time after this the Bishop of Worcester came to the court. He was kindly received by the King, who freely listened to him although he was unwilling to follow his advice. One day they entered the Chapel where the King was about to hear Mass. He stood in his usual place and the Bishop was in his place on the left. In a little while the Archdeacon of Canterbury entered. As soon as the Bishop saw him, he left the Chapel. The King was astonished, though he knew the motive, and became furious in his anger. At once he sent off a messenger to bring back from the Bishop an explanation of his withdrawal from the Chapel. The Bishop, in reply, plainly stated the reason for his action. Another messenger was sent after him, bidding him to leave the country with all speed. The Bishop summoned his followers and servants, instruct-

21 Geoffrey Ridel, Archdeacon of Canterbury, a chaplain and favorite of Henry II, was one of St. Thomas's bitterest enemies. He took a prominent part in the King's contest with the Archbishop, and was excommunicated by the latter in 1169. In 1174 he received the bishopric of Ely, died 1189.

ing them to follow him, and immediately he set out. Meanwhile he sent word to the King that he already had his foot in the stirrup (or circle supporting the foot, or whatever name you wish to give it) about to leave his kingdom. Then he departed. His retinue followed him, as soon as all the baggage had been collected.

After a while the King, incensed, broke out into insults and threats. One of his courtiers said to him, "My Lord, what have you done? You have banished from your kingdom a bishop closely bound to you by ties of faith and blood. If I may say so, you have not done well. Besides you have rendered the Archbishop²² a most acceptable and long desired service. Previously the Pope had no just and obvious cause for punishing you. Now he will use the opportunity, unsought for, which you have offered him. You grieve your friends and give joy to your enemies when you proscribe an innocent man, when you exile a bishop." With these words and words of like tenor, the King was calmed and restored to himself. He dispatched a messenger at full speed to recall the Bishop. The latter refused to return. The King then sent others on swift horses, and finally a third group of messengers with an earl in their midst, with orders to appease the Bishop and induce him to return. If he resisted, they were to bring him back by

22 The text has archiepiscopus, but the passage seems to call for the dative archiepiscopo with the verb addidisti.

force. He returned and spoke very freely to the King. And as long as the Bishop remained at court, the Archdeacon never entered the Chapel, nor did he approach the King in the presence of the Bishop.

The Bishop of Hereford²³ had been summoned by letters from the Archbishop. He came to the coast with the purpose of crossing the Channel. However, he was refused permission to cross. Grieving deeply, he returned to his own diocese. There, overcome by grief as well as by infirmity, he breathed his last.

On Palm Sunday²⁴, in the presence of many of the religious and faithful at Clairvaux, the lord Archbishop, after the procession and sermon, excommunicated the Bishop of London, who had been warned because of his threefold disobedience and had not answered the charge. He also excommunicated several others residing in England or at the royal court for reasons clearly set forth in his letters, which are still in existence. The Archbishop always in his letters explained the charges against those whom he excommunicated. He also added the reasons for excommunication and the laws or decrees. In this way it would be clear that he did nothing harsh through anger or hostility, but rather was deeply concerned over their transgressions because of his devoted paternal affection.

23 Robert de Melun, Bishop of Hereford 1163-1167. He died February 28, 1167.

24 April 13, 1169.

The report of these events reached England immediately; Gossip "thrives by rapid movement, and acquires strength as she goes"²⁵. The Bishop of London, having heard the rumor, came at once to the cathedral in the city. He called together the canons, the clergy of London, the abbots, the priors, and pastors of the neighboring churches. Although he published such a report concerning himself, and announced that he had been excommunicated, yet to the astonishment of all thinking men, he did not act as if excommunicated. Not long after he called together a general synod at which he announced this same report, but to no avail, no one being there to gainsay him, as though he had been excommunicated when absent, undefended and uncited. But it would not be easy to find anyone who would deliver the Archbishop's letters of threefold citation²⁶. Indeed a great gulf, not only of the sea and land, but also of the wrath and threats of the King, was fixed between them²⁷. Nor could the solemnity of the citation be made by a messenger when no messenger dared even to mention the name of the Archbishop. Besides, the Bishop asserted that he was neither inferior nor subject to the Archbishop or the Church of Canterbury. He stated that formerly he had been Bishop of Hereford and in the name of that bishop he had made profession to the Church of

25 Virgil, *Aeneid* 4.175

26 Before formal excommunication, three warnings were required.

27 Compare Luke 16.26

Canterbury. But now he was released from that obedience because he had been transferred to the Church of London, and as Bishop of London he had made no profession to the Church of Canterbury²⁸. In addition to these statements he maintained that according to the account of the chronicles²⁹ he ought to be an archbishop since at the time of the Britons, before the island had been subdued by the Angles, London had been a metropolitan see. In such manner he held forth at great length but because there was no one to oppose it, the question remained. After the assembly had heard him, all left him, each returning to his own church.

He himself did not act as if excommunicated. There were nevertheless some who would tell him privately that he ought to believe the rumors, others, that he ought not believe them. So far he had not heard nor seen the letters containing the judgment pronounced against him, yet on account of mere rumors, he was beside himself and because of his disobedience in carrying out such a cause concerning the Archbishop, he put himself in

28 Gilbert Foliot, Bishop of Hereford (1148-1163) was excused by Pope Alexander from making fresh profession of obedience upon his removal to the Bishopric of London in 1163, with the express provision that it should be of no prejudice to the Archbishop of Canterbury or his church. See Morris, p. 317.

29 Geoffrey of Monmouth, Historia Britonum, 4.19
 Nos etiam...idolatriae eripuerunt; et ubi erant Flamines, Episcopus, ubi erant Archiflamines, Archiepiscopus posuerunt. Sedes autem Archiflamines in tribus nobilioribus civitatibus fuerant, Londoniis videlicet, atque Eboraci, et in urbe Legionum,...Londoniensi vero Metropolitano submissa est Loegria et Cornubia.
 See also 7.3, 11.10.

such great danger of soul. He should wait until he heard the letters bearing the sentence, if he were not able to avoid hearing them. Meanwhile, conducting himself as one still in communion with the Church, he should then avail himself of help. The Bishops and English justiciaries knew that someone who would carry such letters into England was being sought for; therefore they caused the seaports to be very closely watched. The prior of the Church of Canterbury withdrew from his church; the Bishop of Rochester³⁰ did likewise, as also the Bishop of London and the Dean; vacillating between the King and the Archbishop, and faithful to neither, they feared that if they should receive such letters addressed to them, they would fall into the whirlpool of Scylla; if they should not receive them Charybdis would swallow them up³¹.

The Archbishop found a young man, not learned but a layman who, exposing himself to great danger, yet not fearing to die for God, carried the letters containing this sentence into England. On the glorious feast day of the Lord's Ascension³², a certain vicar, named Vitalis, a God-fearing man and a worthy priest, was celebrating Mass at the main altar of the Church of

30 Walter, Bishop of Rochester, 1148-1182, brother of Archbishop Theobald.

31 Scylla, in Greek mythology, was a monster inhabiting a rock of the same name, who devoured passing mariners; while Charybdis was a dangerous gulf or whirlpool, also personified as a female monster.

32 May 29, 1169.

St. Paul in London and was chanting the Offertory prayers. That priest made the offering of the bread and wine, and had arranged the chalice. At that moment Berengar approached, and on his knees held out the letters to the priest as if they were his offering. The latter, astonished, stretched out his hand and took the offering. The other said, "Here is not the Bishop of this See, nor yet the Dean; I see that you are the minister of Jesus Christ. To you, on the part of God and the lord Pope, I deliver here the letters of the Archbishop of Canterbury containing the sentence pronounced against the Bishop of this church and letters from the same prelate for the Dean in order that he and the clergy of this church may observe this sentence. And I say to you on the authority of God that after this Mass, no longer may you celebrate Mass until you show to the Bishop and Dean their respective letters." Having spoken thus, he withdrew among the dense throngs of people leaving the church. These, as is the custom on a feast day, were departing after the Gospel, to their own homes since they had heard Mass in the morning in their own parish churches. A murmur arose among those who had been near the altar, and they asked the priest if the celebration of the divine rites had been forbidden in the city. When the priest replied, "No," the people were silent and did not question him further. The priest continued the celebration of the Mass. Meanwhile a secret and strict search was made for the messenger within the city and outside at the

crossroads by the King's officers, but he was not found." This same Berengar afterwards came to York with letters of the Pope containing the unpleasant tidings, and still escaped unharmed.

After a few days the Bishop of London and the Dean came into the City. The clergy and elder citizens of the city were called together. There publicly, in the sight of all, the priest Vitalis related to the Bishop what had happened; he presented the letter which contained the following:

We have borne with your excesses as long as it was allowed. Oh that our clemency, which has been injurious beyond measure to us, may not redound to the destruction of the whole church! Yet you have always abused our patience and have been willing to hear neither the lord Pope nor us in the word of your salvation, but your obduracy has led you into baser deeds. Therefore, compelled by the necessity of duty and urged by the consideration of justice, for just and manifest causes, inflicting you with the sentence of anathema, we have excommunicated you and cut you off from the body of Christ which is the Church until you make wholly worthy satisfaction. Hence, we order you in virtue of obedience and on the peril of your salvation, dignity, and order, insofar as the regulation of the Church prescribes, to refrain from all communion with the faithful lest contact with you should contaminate the flock of the Lord, for its ruin, the flock which ought to have been instructed by your teaching and influenced by your example for life everlasting.

Vitalis also presented to the Dean his letter which contained these statements; both letters were read publicly:

That which nearly all the Latin world has recognized ought not to escape your knowledge, namely, how shamefully Gilbert of London, our brother--would that he had been a true one!--taking advantage of the general schism, has turned against the cause of the Church and has endeavored to disrupt its peace. Thus far we have borne with him in much patience, which in every instance he has abused. He augments his crime by his disobedience, and in the hardness of his heart he has increased it by his excesses. Therefore since we may not let it pass unnoticed any longer, we have publicly excommunicated him, as the requirements of duty

demanded and the consideration of justice urged. We command you in virtue of obedience and on the peril of your order and salvation, to refrain entirely from communion with him as becomes the faithful of Christ. Likewise we command that you avoid these others under the same punishment, whose names are listed below. We shall also condemn with the same sentence, on the authority of God, those who have been solemnly cited by us, unless in the meanwhile by the Feast of the Ascension of Our Lord they make satisfaction; namely, Geoffrey, the Archdeacon of Canterbury, Robert, his vicar; Richard of Ilchester³³; Richard de Luci³⁴; William Giffard; Adam of Charing; and those who with the aid or advice of the Lord King, or by his command or through their own boldness, have seized our goods or the goods of our clerics; and those who, with the help or advice of the King, contrary to the liberty of the Church, are known to have instigated the proscription and pillaging of the innocent and who are preventing the messengers of the Pope and our messengers from fulfilling the requirements of the Church. Let not your heart be troubled in these affairs nor let it be afraid³⁵, since, God being propitious, we are protected by the bulwark of the Holy See against the deceits of the maligners and subterfuges of appeals. These are the names of the excommunicated: Jocelin, Bishop of Salisbury³⁶; Earl Hugh³⁷; Randolph de Broc; Thomas Fitzbernard³⁸; Robert de Broc, cleric; Hugh of St. Clair; Letard, cleric of Northfleet; Nigel de Sackville³⁹; Richard, the brother of William of Hastings, who

33 Richard of Ilchester, Archdeacon of Poitiers, later Bishop of Winchester, 1173-1188, excommunicated for his part in the English embassy to the schismatic Emperor Frederick and the Archbishop of Cologne.

34 Richard de Luci, chief justiciary of England under Henry, excommunicated as one of the authors of the Constitutions of Clarendon.

35 Compare John 14.1,27

36 Jocelin, Bishop of Salisbury (1142-1184); the reason for his excommunication is explained subsequently by Fitzstephen.

37 Hugh Bigod, Earl of Norfolk (d. 1176 or 1177) excommunicated for the retention of land belonging to the Monastery of Pentney.

38 Thomas Fitzbernard, officer of King Henry's household and justicier, excommunicated, together with Hugh de St. Clair, for the usurpation of the goods of the Church of Canterbury.

39 Nigel de Sackville, cleric and sealbearer of the King, usurped the Church and Manor of Harrow, after the departure of Thomas from England.

has seized our church at Monkton. Farewell.

From then on the Bishop, on the advice of all, conducted himself as if excommunicated. He informed the King of what had occurred. The King answered him in this fashion:

I have heard of the grievance which that Thomas, the traitor and my enemy, has inflicted on you and other persons in my realm. And I endure it with no less vexation in your case than if he vomited forth his venom against my own person. Therefore, you may be sure that I shall do all in my power, through the Pope and the King of France and all my friends, to prevent his harming us or our kingdom further. Hence I wish and advise that you in the meanwhile do not allow your spirit to be disturbed at all, but provide for yourself manfully, determining whether it be more expedient for your own and my good to come to me at once in Normandy or to remain in England. The entire decision I leave in your hands; I assure you that if you come to me and wish to go to Rome, I shall supply honorably and sufficiently everything necessary for the journey from my own means.

In the presence of T...the cleric,
given at St. Macaire in Gascony.

The Bishop crossed the Channel and through the intervention of the lord King and the intercession of his own messengers, he brought it about that absolution be given to him through the extraordinary power of Rotrou of Rouen⁴⁰ and Bartholomew of Exeter⁴¹, to whom the Pope had given faculties for absolving him. He returned, together with certain bishops and messengers of the King, as well as his own messengers who had come back from the Pope. Then announcement was made publicly in the cathedral church that he had been absolved.

Jocelin, the Bishop of Salisbury, had fallen into disfavor

40 Rotrou de Beaumont, Archbishop of Rouen (1165-1183).

41 Bartholomew, Bishop of Exeter (1161-1184).

with the King. In order to ingratiate himself again, he presented the Deanship of Salisbury to a certain cleric of the King, John of Oxford⁴². Previously, however, he had been expressly forbidden by letters of the Pope to give that honor to anyone without the knowledge and consent of his canons; it happened that certain of the elder canons of this church were fellow exiles of the Archbishop. Therefore, the Archbishop, on the authority of the Pope, excommunicated him. And he did this, strengthened by the example of blessed Anselm, his fourth predecessor⁴³. Anselm, in exile at Cluny, excommunicated the Count of Meulant, whose assistance William II, the King of England, had employed against the freedom of election of bishops and abbots, the King usurping for himself the right of presenting the pastoral staffs⁴⁴.

He also excommunicated certain barons and personal clerics of the King on account of their various misdemeanors, and he ordered these excommunicates to be publicly denounced. In this way, doubtless, the cubs are struck before the lion.

42 John of Oxford, Dean of Salisbury, later Bishop of Norwich (1175-1200).

43 St. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury (1093-1109).

44 Robert de Beaumont, Count of Meulant, (d. 1118); excommunicated for supporting the right of the crown in the question of investitures. James Robertson, Rolls Series, volume III, p. 92, note, states that the sentence of excommunication appears to have been passed by Paschal II, not by St. Anselm.

With great difficulty a messenger was found who would carry this sentence into England. The English King, now promising peace, sent to the Pope for absolution. The Pope answered that absolution might be given and this by someone other than the Archbishop. This was quite unusual but it was done to win over the King. Several times through messengers sent to the Pope the English King obtained from him the absolution of certain of his barons on the plea that they were in danger of death for he announced to him that he was going to lead them in his army against the Welsh. With this excuse, in the Church of the Holy Trinity in London at one time many were absolved.

For a time the Pope also removed from the Archbishop his faculties and power of imposing judgment upon the King or his fellow citizens⁴⁵. This he did assuredly with the hope that by making the King victorious he might incline him toward his own and God's counsel. For a long time the Pope was kept in suspense by that hope, yet in the end he was deceived. When therefore his oil did not heal their wounds, the lord Pope again freed the Archbishop from all restraint; again he tried to pour on wine. The King, incensed, ordered the annual Peter's Pence to be kept for himself in England. Then, taking every precaution he gave orders that no one crossing over into England should be

45 Pope Alexander in 1168 suspended the powers of the Archbishop until the next Lent, hoping thus to win over the English King. When this failed, the Archbishop's powers were fully restored.

admitted unless he carried a passport from the King. This was to prevent anyone from bringing into England the sentence of interdict which he knew the Archbishop held in reserve.

On their part the Bishop of London and the rest of the English Bishops, in order that the Archbishop might not publish any interdict against themselves or the kingdom, appealed to the Pope, including almost a whole year as the term of their appeal. They announced this in writing to the Archbishop and no further proceedings were taken. When the year had passed, they renewed the appeal, and informed the Archbishop of this. By tricks of this kind they escaped his power. They refused to recognize that an appeal is an invention of man. It belongs to civil law; it was introduced for the purpose of warding off unjust afflictions, threatening our possessions or our life. Whence even blessed Paul, fearing for his life, when he was seized, said, "I appeal to Caesar"⁴⁶. In such cases, the appeal has a place. But it does not seem good to wise Catholics that the right of appeal ought to be extended for the purpose of destroying obedience, for making void the powers of the Church, for escaping excommunication, which was not introduced by human law, but by the word of Jesus Christ Who, bestowing this power on His Apostles, said, "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever you

shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven⁴⁷. God forbid that human law should be injurious to divine law, and a human invention put to naught one which is divinely constituted.

Meanwhile several of the English Bishops died, so that the King in addition to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, had in his possession six vacant episcopal sees in England⁴⁸. Several other Bishops, overcome by the feebleness of age, were approaching death.

On their side, the King of France and the French nobles, recognizing the sad plight of the King and the English realm, frequently addressed the King in the cause of peace, at the urging of the Pope, as well as of their own accord. At length the English King agreed that the Archbishop of Canterbury should be summoned to their conference. Many conferences were held between them; but it will suffice to make a few brief remarks about some of them.

During the Conference at Les Planches⁴⁹ the Cardinals William of Pavia and Otto, and the Archbishop of Rouen addressed

47 Compare Matthew 16.19

48 The six episcopal sees and the years during which they were vacant are as follows:

Bath and Wells	1166-1174
Chichester	1169-1174
Hereford	1167-1174
Lincoln	1168-1173
Carlisle	1156-1203
Ely	1169-1174

49 November 18, 1167.

the Archbishop with great urgency: "The quarrel concerning jurisdiction is long standing, and between the kings and archbishops of England there is always occasion of complaint in regard to the customs of the king. This is the source of the trouble, this is the origin of all evils. And since you say that you love the peace of your church above all things, and since you condemn these customs, it will now be manifest, now you will give certain proof that you mean what you say. The peace of the Church rests in your hands. Are you willing to renounce the archbishopric if the King renounces his customs?"

He replied, "These things are not weighed in an equal balance. For I am not able to resign the archbishopric without violation of the honor of my Church and my person. Such a thing was unheard of in the case of my predecessors. The honor of the King and the salvation of his soul is far safer in renouncing than in retaining the customs. This is clearly the case since the Pope has condemned them, and you also, together with the Roman Church."

When they could not entice him into saying that he would renounce his dignity, they asked him if he wished in their presence to bring suit against the King over the points in dispute. And they pretended to have in this cause the fullness of power which, however, they did not possess. He replied,

"Yes, if, however, entire restitution is made first." "This, they say, is impossible. He rejoined that nothing else would be expedient for him or for the Church of God. Then the English Bishops made an appeal, which the cardinals sent in writing to the Pope, including a whole year, less fifteen days, as the term of their appeal.

In the Conference at Montmirail⁵⁰, the English King made him such fair promises of peace through messengers that he was almost persuaded to support entirely the good pleasure of the King so that the King thus seemed to have conquered. The Archbishops of Rheims, Sens, Rouen, the King of France, the bishops and the Abbot of Montdieu of the Carthusian Order⁵¹, who were present, were all of that opinion. And nothing was said of the written Constitutions of Clarendon. "For what need is there," they said, "of speaking about these. By your rescript, by the authority of the Pope, you have condemned these, and you have released all who gave consent from the obligation of observing them." In the following conference he retained always the phrase, "Saving the honor of God and the liberty of the Church". All the above named wondered at this. The English King remarked, "All these conditions will lead nowhere. Here we shall have nothing sensible." Although

⁵⁰ January 6, 1169.

⁵¹ Simon, prior of Montdieu, one of an embassy sent to the King by the Pope to promote peace. The superiors of the Carthusian houses were given the title of prior, not abbot.

the mediators mentioned above urged him to abandon this phrase, he would not give in; in despair, as it were they withdrew, leaving him as one who spurned their advice. He himself, returning to his companions, said among other things that God on that day had paid them a signal honor. They should on this account give the greatest thanks to God, since they had insisted that the honor of God which the others had disregarded, should be unharmed in every respect. But many of his companions, longing to return to their native land, were vexed because peace had not been forthcoming and because he had clung obstinately to his prescribed conditions, although the King was offering him safe return and restitution.

On their return from that conference in the retinue of the King of France, a certain cleric of his, Henry of Houghton, was riding right in front of the Archbishop. His horse stumbled suddenly; ironically he called out to his horse, clearly so that the Archbishop might hear, "Ho! Go on, saving the honor of God and Holy Church and my order." The Archbishop, though grieved, remained silent. After a little while, when he drew up with his clerics in order to allow their horses to rest and cool off, he said to them, "Beloved companions, you who have endured everything with me, why do you so think and speak against me? Our return and restoration is indeed a little thing; the liberty of the Church, of which the King says nothing, is by far more important. At length I shall accept peace in the best way I can;

but you never saw such close bargaining." However, afterwards all the distinguished men mentioned above agreed in the opinion of the good Archbishop Thomas; they condemned their own error and esteemed him as a holy man and a valiant champion of God. They approved of his constancy and were the more united and strengthened in their affection for him.

There was another conference at Montmartre⁵², where the English King had come for the purpose of offering prayers to St. Denys. He had placed an offering on the altar of a very fine robe and eighty gold pieces⁵³. He was honorably received there by the King of France and all the clergy and knights who had come to meet him. Afterwards there was a discussion concerning peace between him and the Archbishop. The latter, having been sounded out and questioned about the familiar conditions was found always the same. He sent his petition in writing to the King, asking that he restore the rights of his Church of Canterbury and all that had been taken from him, his clerics and his followers, and also fraternal peace and liberty to the English clergy. He himself would be faithful to him as to his master and king; he would be devoted in all things, saving the honor of God and Holy Church and his order. The King did not give his

⁵² November 18, 1169.

⁵³ quater viginti aureos is best translated "eighty pieces of gold" as quater literally means four times. Morris, p. 336, translates it "four and twenty gold pieces".

consent to these proposals; yet for the sake of giving satisfaction to his hearers, he offered to abide by the decision of the clergy of France or the schools of Paris after their cause had been fully discussed; but he would say nothing about making restitution beforehand. Then he departed to pay a visit to the Queen and to Philip, the King's son, at Paris, thus as it were scorning the Archbishop and breaking off the conference. This in addition to all the rest greatly annoyed the Archbishop who remarked that they might peradventure summon him many times over before he would come again to a conference. While they separated in this way, mutually at odds, the days flew by.

Another conference was to be held according to the agreement, at Pontoise⁵⁴. On the day appointed the Archbishop of Sens and the Bishop of Bethlehem⁵⁵ were present. The King of England refused to come to that meeting place. Through a messenger he sent instructions to them at their assembly that if they were willing to come to Gisors he would confer with them. In this way their pains and the hope of the Archbishop were put to naught.

At one time the King, the counts, and the nobles of France addressed the English King on behalf of the older clerics of the Archbishop who had remained with him, requesting that he at

54 Early in the year 1170 A. D., before Henry's departure to England for the coronation of his son.

55 Rudolf, Bishop of Bethlehem (1157-1173).

least restore to them their revenues. "If for the sake of their own advancement, they served the Archbishop, this was not to be wondered at. The disagreement between him and the Archbishop did not affect them; because the two were quarreling among themselves, these clerics were being unjustly punished." The English King agreed that these clerics might approach him, giving them a safe-conduct for their journey, their stay at court and their return.

On Low Sunday⁵⁶ they came to Angers, since the King had celebrated the Paschal feast there. Seated one day in the midst of his courtiers, he prepared to give an audience to those clerics. John of Salisbury⁵⁷, summoned first, entered his presence. Having saluted the King, he first besought from him peace and the restitution of his ecclesiastical benefices, as he in no respect had knowingly merited the displeasure of the King. He was moreover prepared to be devoted, obedient, and faithful to the King as his earthly lord, saving his order. On the King's part it was answered him that born and nourished in the King's dominions he had his relations there, and that from the good things of the King's land he had reaped for himself a fine harvest of honors and riches. He ought therefore as a native of the King's realm to be faithful to the King against the Archbishop and all men. An oath was proposed to him, if he

⁵⁶ May 1, 1166.

⁵⁷ John of Salisbury, associate, cleric, and faithful follower of St. Thomas, later Bishop of Chartres (1176-1180); a well-known scholar, he wrote a short life of St. Thomas.

were willing to swear to it, that he would be faithful to the King in life and limb, and in preserving his earthly honor against all men, and expressly, that he would lawfully keep his written customs and royal dignities, whatever the Pope or the Archbishop or his own Bishop might do. Although he yielded in all else, he adhered firmly to the customs of the Archbishop, saying that he had been nourished from his youth by the goods of the Church of Canterbury, and that he had sworn obedience to the Pope and to his Archbishop; he could neither desert the Church of Canterbury or his lord the Archbishop, nor undertake to observe any constitutions whatsoever against the Pope and the Church of Canterbury. But he added that he was prepared to receive, together with the lord Pope and the Archbishop, whatever they received, to reject whatever they rejected. The King was not satisfied with this. He was ordered to withdraw.

Master Herbert of Bosham⁵⁸ was called for and entered. The King remarked to his companions concerning him, "Behold! You will see a proud man enter now." Tall in stature and handsome in appearance, he was clothed in appropriate splendor, having a tunic and cloak of the green cloth of Auxerre, hanging down from his shoulders and reaching to his ankles, after the German fashion, handsomely decorated with all his trappings. Having greeted the King, he took his seat. He was addressed in the

⁵⁸ Herbert of Bosham, companion of St. Thomas and author of a lengthy life of his master. There is little known with certainty of his later years.

same way as John, and he began to reply for the most part in the same fashion. However he remained firm in regard to the Archbishop, and his fidelity and the written customs. He praised the Archbishop highly for the uprightness of his life and his loyalty to the King, saying that he alone was faithful to the King who would not suffer the King to go astray when it was in his power to recall him. For he who speaks to the King only of that which is pleasing, who disregards his error, if there is any, and encourages it by his silence, is not faithful to the King; he neglects his trust, and makes false promises. Hence, he said, he could not swear that true fidelity to the King, unless he might be an inseparable companion of the King and might correct him when there was just cause for correction. And he was well aware that the King was of such a disposition and spirit that he would not listen to him nor endure this.

Of the customs he said just what John had, and added that it seemed strange to him that the King had caused them to be written, "For there are in other kingdoms, also," he said, "evil customs against the Church, but they are not written. Therefore, because they are not written, there is greater hope that if God inspire those kings, the customs will be eradicated."

The King, seeking to catch him in his words, asked, "What are the evil customs in the kingdom of our lord the King of France?" Herbert replied, "The customs of exacting toll and

passage money from clerics and strangers. Likewise when a bishop dies, the goods of his household, his money, all his movable property, even the windows and doors are carried off and become the property of the King. In the same way in the realm of the King of the Germans these and similar evil customs exist, but they are not written."

"Why," queried the King, "do you take away from the dignity of his name, not calling him emperor of the Germans?"

"He is King of the Germans. But when he writes, he inscribes himself 'Emperor of the Romans, the ever august'."

"The shame of it!" cried the King, "it is indeed a great annoyance that this son of a priest should disturb my realm and disquiet my peace."

"It is not I that do it," rejoined Herbert. "Neither am I the son of a priest, as I was not born when my father was in orders; afterwards my father was permitted to become a priest. Neither is he the son of a king unless his father was a king when he begot him⁵⁹." Then Jordan Tarsun, one of the barons sitting by, said, "Truly whoever's son he may be, I would give half my land that he were mine." This statement the King took ill, but he said nothing. After a little he ordered Herbert to leave; and he withdrew.

59 This was a hit at Henry II whose father, Geoffrey of Anjou, was not a king.

Philip of Calve, having been summoned, enters next.⁶⁰ A Londoner by birth, he had been studying at Tours for two years before the exile of the Archbishop, attending lectures on the Holy Scripture and teaching law. He was a man of great reading and very eloquent, but sickly. For this reason he neither accompanied the Archbishop, nor was sent to Rome, nor was he involved in the Archbishop's disagreement with the King. These statements about him were made known to the King. Besides he had influential mediators who told the King that he had said, when he heard that he had been deprived of his possessions in England on the Archbishop's account, "Good God, what does our good King seek from me by this?" And so the King was persuaded, in order not to appear entirely ungracious, to remit in his case the proposed oath⁶¹; he gave him his favor and allowed the restoration of his goods. Then he rose up and turned his attention to other business.

At length it was reported to the lord Pope that no agreement was being reached. The Archbishop also received from the Pope the authority to pass sentence against the person of the

60 Morris, p. 285, states that Tours is probably a mistake of Fitzstephen's for Rheims. Philip is mentioned by John of Salisbury as living at Rheims, having been recommended to Fulk, Dean of Rheims by St. Thomas.

61 The oath, already proposed to John of Salisbury, to be faithful to the King and to observe the Constitutions of Clarendon.

King; but he kept endeavoring to win him to repentance and satisfaction rather by patience and warnings. When the King heard this, that the Archbishop's full powers had been restored, he sent Reginald the Lombard⁶² as messenger to the Pope. He was to endeavor to persuade the lord Pope either to transfer the Archbishop to another archiepiscopal see, although already the Pope had been urged many times in vain to depose him and each time was found to be inexorable and scornful of bribes; or to recall that power entrusted to the Archbishop of punishing him; or to delay the passing of judgment in the hope of peace and reconciliation with the Archbishop, which the King promised to the Pope. Indeed Reginald obtained this last concession from the Pope.

Again and again the lord Pope addressed the King with gentle words and admonitions. Making no progress this way, he threatened to lay the axe to the root of the tree⁶³. The King, without doubt receiving intelligence of this, caused an oath to be taken by all England, by every layman twelve or fifteen years of age and over, against the Pope and Archbishop, that they would not receive their letters nor obey their commands. Furthermore, if anyone was found delivering their letters, he would be handed over to the authorities as a mortal enemy of

62 Reginald Fitz-Jocelin, "The Lombard", Archdeacon of Salisbury, later Bishop of Bath (1174-1191) and Archbishop-elect of Canterbury (1191).

63 Compare Matthew 3.10

the King's crown. Against this oath of apostasy a certain noble lady, the daughter of Baldwin of Redvers⁶⁴, resisted manfully, and full of zeal for the obedience due to God, she did not take the oath herself nor allow any of her retainers to do so. The Archbishop of York⁶⁵ in the same way acted boldly. The other bishops, who remained in England, alas! allowed the oath to be administered in their churches. When the Archbishop heard this, he took compassion on such a great error and apostasy. In letters sent secretly to some God-fearing men he absolved from this oath all those who unwillingly had sworn to it.

The King had the seaports very closely watched. Meanwhile he returned into England, and had his son, Henry, crowned immediately at London. The Archbishop of York, the above-mentioned Roger, performed the ceremony of the imposition of hands, contrary to the hope and expectation of almost the whole kingdom. The Archbishop of Canterbury had foreseen and prepared for this event. He had obtained from the Pope letters which were delivered to the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of London on Saturday, the day before the coronation, forbidding them or the other Bishops of England to perform the ceremony of coronation, since he himself had not been summoned for the event, as the coronation of the King was a prerogative of the Church of Canterbury. Notwithstanding the Prince was crowned on the day

64 Hadwisa, daughter of Baldwin of Redvers, Earl of Devon and Exeter.

65 Roger de Pont l'Eveque, Archbishop of York (1154-1181).

before the feast of St. Vitus and Modestus⁶⁶. Immediately afterwards the King crossed back again into Normandy.

Previous to this, when the arrangements for the coronation of his son had been made, the English King, then on the Continent, had made this known to the Bishop of Worcester. He ordered him to return to his native land and with the bishops, a few of whom still remained in England, to assist at the coronation of his son. He did not however reveal to him that he intended to have the Archbishop of York crown him by the imposition of his hands. The Bishop, hoping for the best, agreed and came to the seaport of Dieppe. The King had already come to England. The Queen, who had remained in Normandy and Richard de Humet, the Chief Justiciary of the Normans, wrote to the Bishop of Worcester forbidding him to cross the Channel. They also sent letters to the Provost of the port and to the ship-owners ordering them not to transport him to England or to allow him to cross. They well knew that the Bishop would not suffer the Prince to be crowned in the province of Canterbury with the Archbishop of York performing the ceremony of the laying on of hands, as long as the Archbishop of Canterbury yet lived. For it belonged to the dignity of the latter to consecrate a new king. Forbidden thus to cross the Channel, the Bishop remained in Normandy.

⁶⁶ June 14, 1170.

After the coronation, the King, as has been said, crossed over into Normandy. On the further side of Falaise, the Bishop of Worcester came out to meet him about three miles beyond the city. The King displayed a haughty countenance and at once broke out in insulting words, saying, "Now it is clear that you are a traitor. I myself commanded you to be present at the coronation of my son, and I even named the day. You refused to attend. You have clearly shown in this that you have regard neither for me nor for the advancement of my son. Indeed it is evident that you favor my enemy more and hate me and mine. No longer shall you remain in possession of the revenues of your bishopric. I will take them away from you, for you have shown yourself unworthy of the bishopric and every benefice. Truly you never were the son of my uncle, good Earl Robert⁶⁷, who brought us up together in that castle⁶⁸, and had us there taught our letters and our manners."

The Bishop, untroubled in his innocence, related to the King with simplicity and humility what had happened, how he had arrived at the port and had received letters forbidding him to cross. The King did not believe him; greatly angered, he said, "The Queen is in that castle at Falaise and Richard de Humet

67 Robert, Earl of Gloucester, natural son of Henry I, King of England, (died 1147) was a loyal supporter and adviser of his half-sister Matilda and her son Henry II.

68 The Castle of the Earl of Gloucester at Bristol.

either is there or somewhere in the vicinity. Do you cite them as your authorities?"

"Certainly not the Queen," replied the Bishop, "lest perhaps, if through respect or fear of you, she should suppress the truth, you would be enraged the more with me; if on the other hand she were to confess it, you would fall into a shameful rage against that noble lady. I am not so important that for this she should hear one harsh word from your lips. I prefer that it happened thus, that I was not present at the coronation, which was indeed unjust and contrary to God, not because of the one crowned, but by reason of the presumption of the one who performed the coronation. If I had been present I would not have allowed him to have crowned the Prince. You say that I am not the son of the Earl Robert. I know not; but indeed I am the son of my mother⁶⁹, with whom my father received the right and inheritance of such a great earlship and estate. But you have not, by deeds of suitable gratitude, shown that my father, that Earl Robert, was your uncle, that he brought you up with fitting honor, that on your behalf he fought against King Stephen for sixteen years, and held off his hostile attacks, and at length on your account was taken prisoner. If you had recalled to mind these and similar services of my father, you would not have so reduced my brothers to want and destitution.

69 Mable of Glamorgan through whom Robert received from Henry I a large heritage.

You have decreased my brother the Earl's tenure and honor of a thousand men, which your grandfather, the illustrious King Henry, gave to my father, to a fief of two hundred and forty men. You allowed my other younger brother, a brave soldier, as it is said, to be so poor and needy that on account of his poverty he has left secular life and service, and devoted himself by perpetual vow to serve the Hospital of Jerusalem, assuming the cross and habit. This is the way you reward your relatives and friends; thus you are accustomed to repay those who have deserved well of you. Why do you hurl against me dire threats to deprive me of the benefices of my bishopric? I shall be removed or not, as you will. Let them be yours, if you do not consider sufficient the alms of your forefathers, the good kings, and the patrimony of Jesus Christ which from the archbishopric and six vacant bishoprics and many abbeys you receive unjustly and at the peril of your soul, and turn to profane uses."

These words and others of the same sort were said in the hearing of all the attendants who were riding on each side of the King. One knight of Aquitaine, who did not know the Bishop, said to his companions, "Who is that who speaks thus?" When he was told that it was a Bishop, he answered, "It is truly lucky that he is a priest. If he were a knight, the King would not leave him two acres of land." But another one, aiming at pleas-

ing the King, rebuked the Bishop bitterly. The King, hearing this, was indignant; turning to him, he berated him with the foulest abuse, saying among other things, "Do you think, you wicked fellow, that if I say what I wish to my cousin the Bishop, you or any other person may insult him or assail him with threats? Indeed I can scarcely keep my hands from your eyes. It is shameful for you and the others to abuse a bishop." They arrived at their lodgings; after their meal, the King and the Bishop retired and talked peacefully together concerning a reconciliation with the Archbishop.

On the other hand a great disturbance was occasioned in England by the King's justiciaries who charged it as a crime to certain abbots and ecclesiastics in England that they had sent sums of money to the exiled Archbishop, the enemy, as they said, of the King. However they did not dare to make this charge against the Bishop of Winchester⁷⁰ who had, because of his devotion and compassion for his lord the Archbishop whom he had ordained, warded off poverty by frequent visits and timely presents of gold and silver. But among those who were charged with this, some who had done it, overcome with fear, denied it. In order that they might have peace, they purchased it with their money. One dared to say openly, "Why do you blame us for having performed a work of mercy toward one who is poor and in exile,"

⁷⁰ Henry of Blois, Bishop of Winchester (1129-1171), brother of King Stephen.

and for having made a present from our own money to our father? He is not religious nor a worthy Christian who neglects the miserable and who does not have compassion on the afflicted nor pity for the poor. You say that the Archbishop is the King's enemy. We do not know it, nor are we inclined to believe it; and yet if he were our enemy, we are commanded to love our enemy for the sake of God⁷¹, and to give food to the hungry and drink to the thirsty⁷².

Someone was said to have remarked or written to the King about the Archbishop, "Why is he kept out? It will be far better for him to be kept in than kept out." And this was a sufficient hint for one who understood it. Wherefore the King hastened to a conference concerning peace, and there conceded everything which was asked of him, and which formerly he had refused. But first he had his son crowned with all dispatch, on account of something which could happen; and if any crime were to be committed, the kingdom would not be punished on his account, since he would not be King. What designs were concealed in the hidden recesses of the King's heart cannot be known. God knows Who searches the reins and the heart⁷³; I do not. But those who believed in his works before the fact, during the fact, and after it, knew this about him.

71 Compare Matthew 5.44; Luke 6.27,35; Romans 12.20

72 Compare Proverbs 25.21

73 Compare Jeremiah 11.20, 17.10, 20.12; Psalms 7.10

The King of France and the messengers of the lord Pope again address him more earnestly about reconciliation and peace with the Archbishop, as the Pope was neither able nor willing to disregard any longer such great excesses of the King, the miseries of the Archbishop and his fellow exiles, as well as the sufferings of the afflicted English Church.

The King agreed to be interviewed that summer. Therefore in the course of the sixth year of the Archbishop Thomas's exile, on the day before the feast of blessed Mary Magdalen⁷⁴, there assembled at Freiteval the Archbishops of Rheims, Sens, Rouen, Tyre⁷⁵, the King of France, the Bishop of Nevers⁷⁶, and the Abbot of Grammont who was representing the Pope⁷⁷, the Bishop of Poitiers, and most of the Bishops of Normandy, the counts and nearly all the nobles of Gaul, for the purpose of restoring peace between the King of England and the Archbishop of Canterbury. No English bishop, except Roger of Worcester, was there. On the same day, the English King came to the lodging of the King of France; in private they conversed together and after a little while the English King said in jest, "Tomorrow that robber of yours shall have his peace, and indeed he shall have a good one." "What robber, pray, by the Saints of France?" queried the French King. "That Archbishop of Canterbury of yours." The French King

⁷⁴ July 21, 1170 A. D.

⁷⁵ Frederick, Archbishop of Tyre (1163-1173).

⁷⁶ Bernard de Saint Saulge, Bishop of Nevers (1160-1177).

⁷⁷ Etienne de Liciac, prior of Grammont at the time of St. Thomas's exile and death. The priors of Grammont did not receive the title of abbot until 1317.

rejoined, "Would that he were ours as well as yours. You will have honor before God and men if you make a good peace with him, and we shall be grateful to you." These remarks were made in the hearing of others; they spoke as they wished in private.

All went out on the morrow for that conference. The King of France did not attend; perhaps this had been agreed upon between them at the request of the English King, who promised him that he would do everything which he had asked, without his presence. Certainly he had already wearied the English King with many pleas on behalf of the Archbishop. And since now the King of England had come to this conference in the French King's realm, the latter agreed to be present at the conference and reunion more in spirit and authority, although bodily absent. He gave the English King free rein to his own liberty and generosity, that he might seem to be more his own master, since the French King was influencing him neither by entreaty nor by his presence. In this respect his mercy would appear more clearly, that, left entirely to his own will and subjected to no pressure, he had restored his peace and favor to the Archbishop. Indeed the entreaties of his lords are commands to the wise.

Different ones spoke at length about the benefits of peace and of restoring their good will. The King assented to all the conditions for peace and the liberty of the Church, for restoring his favor, and making restitution to the Church of Canterbury

and to the person of the Archbishop. He agreed to the terms for the restitution of the lands and churches to the clerics, and to everyone despoiled for the sake of the Archbishop, and for relinquishing to the Archbishop the bestowal of the churches of the Archbishopric which had become vacant in the meantime--the King had bestowed them on his own clerics.

The good Archbishop, unwilling that the King pass over anything which afterwards could be a source of ill will or disagreement between them, (as it is the part of a wise man neither to deceive nor to be deceived), spoke to him in this fashion, "My lord King, I often call to memory everything which you have done for me, all the benefits both of my first and of my second elevation and of the very great honor given me. I receive them gratefully and with appreciation, and in everything I give thanks, as I am indebted and subject to you, my King and earthly lord, saving the honor of God and of Holy Church. And now I am especially grateful, seeing that you have just now recalled and restored me to your peace and favor. But among all the afflictions which I endured in your wrath and indignation, the proscription, the plundering and the banishment of myself and my dependents, even every affliction of the Church of Canterbury, there is one which moves me more, and which I neither can nor ought pass over unmentioned and uncorrected. It is this, that you had your son crowned in the Church of Canterbury by the Archbishop of York;

you robbed the Church of Canterbury of this dignity of consecrating the King, the Church which anointed you as King with the unction of the mercy of God and which among all her dignities has considered this peculiar, proper and special to herself from the time long past when blessed Augustine first established the metropolitan see of Canterbury⁷⁸."

To this the King answered, "Truly I heard and understood that among other royal prerogatives of my kingdom, there was this one that if the English King during his lifetime wished to raise his son to the Kingship, he was allowed to do this wherever and by whichever Archbishop or Bishop of the Kingdom he wished. My great grandfather, King William, who conquered England, received from the Archbishop of York⁷⁹ at London consecration and the crown; my grandfather King Henry, from the hand of the Bishop of Hereford⁸⁰."

The Archbishop replied to these statements, "It is certainly true that they crowned these kings, but in the case of their coronation the dignity of the Church of Canterbury was not diminished; for when the Archbishop of York anointed King William, the see of Canterbury was as it were vacant. Stigand⁸¹, who at that time seemed to be at the head of the Church of

78 St. Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, was sent from Rome to Britain in 596 A. D. He received the pallium in 601 and the See of Canterbury was erected in 602.

79 Eadred, Archbishop of York (1060-1069).

80 Gerard, Bishop of Hereford (1096-1101).

81 Stigand, Archbishop-elect of Canterbury (1052-1070).

Canterbury, was not the Archbishop; he never received the pallium from the holy Church of Rome. And since the Church of Canterbury was vacant, the Archbishop of York stood out as the greater and more distinguished among the English clergy. But when King Henry was to have been crowned, St. Anselm was Archbishop of Canterbury. But he was a long distance away, an exile at Cluny. Since the delay which would have been occasioned by recalling him could have been of the greatest danger to the Kingdom, in order that civil war might not spread over the face of the land, that Bishop of Hereford, one of his suffragans, acted as substitute in the place and office of the absent Archbishop, thus preserving for him the dignity of his father."

"That can very well be true," answered the King. "What I have said in the case, I do not say to the detriment of the Church of Canterbury, which consecrated me and whose dignity I wish to be in every respect unharmed. If I have committed any fault against her, I am prepared on my part to correct it on the decision of the Pope and the Roman Church. And you may demand satisfaction from the Archbishop of York and the English Bishops for the wrongs inflicted on the Church of Canterbury and yourself."

This satisfied the Archbishop. That he might express his thanks to the King for this reply and concession, he dismounted from his horse and was about to kneel at the King's feet. When the King perceived this, he hastily leaped down from his horse

and embracing the Archbishop, raised him up, receiving him with a look of good-humor and a cheerful countenance, which gave promise of peace and a return to favor. Then he helped him to mount, holding the stirrup which supported his right foot. Grateful tears broke forth from all men of good will who were present. At that juncture the King was asked to give him the kiss of peace. For some time before when there had been a discussion about reconciliation between them⁸², the King had granted his return and restitution and all such considerations, but as he refused the kiss alone, the reconciliation for a long time was at a standstill. The King declared that in his wrath he had taken an oath at one time that he would never give him the kiss of peace. Wherefore, the Pope, having been consulted, absolved the King from such an oath, if he had ever made it, and instructed him for the salvation of his soul to give him the kiss in good peace⁸³. The King replied, "In my own kingdom I shall kiss his lips, his hand, his feet a hundred times; I will hear his Mass a hundred times. But now let it be postponed. I do not speak capriciously. It is to my honor that he seem to give way to me in something. And to give the kiss in my own kingdom will seem to be from greater favor and kindness, whereas

82 Negotiations for peace between the King and the Archbishop at Montmartre, November 18, 1169, were abruptly terminated when Henry refused to give St. Thomas the kiss of peace as a pledge of his good will, the kiss being the guarantee which the Pope advised Thomas to require.

83 Fitzstephen resumes his account of the meeting at Freiteval.

here it would seem to be done of necessity." As everyone approved, the Archbishop yielded. All rejoiced who had heard and seen these events--the clergy, the knights, the people, every age, every order. Afterwards the lord King and the Archbishop alone and withdrawn apart conversed together for a long time. The assembly dispersed.

An agreement was reached between the King and the Archbishop that the latter should return into Gaul, there to pay his thanks to his benefactors and to the Pope by messenger and in writing. When he had received permission and all arrangements had been made for his return to his native land, he was to return to the King, who in person would escort him back into England if that were possible, or would send with him the Archbishop of Rouen, so that when he returned he might be received on his restoration to his proper rank and privileges with great respect. And meanwhile the King gave orders that the confiscated possessions should be restored to him and to each of his destitute followers. Concerning his reconciliation with the Archbishop, the King wrote in these words:

For the love of God and of the lord Pope, for my own salvation and that of my heirs, I free from my anger and displeasure the Archbishop of Canterbury and his followers who are in exile with him and on his account; and I release the same from any previous complaints, if I had any against him, and I grant to him and his, true peace and abiding security from me and mine. I restore to him the Church of Canterbury in that entirety in which he held it when he was made Archbishop, as also all the possessions which he himself and the Church had and held, for

the purpose of holding and possessing them freely and honorably in the same way as he and his did have and hold them entirely and honorably. I return to him likewise all the churches and prebends belonging to the Archbishopric which began to be vacant after he himself left the territory of Canterbury, so that he may do with these as with his own, just as shall be pleasing to him, saving the honor of my kingdom.

Henry, King of England, to his son Henry, King of England,
Greetings:

Know that Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, has made peace with me at my good pleasure. And therefore I order that he and all his have peace. Please see to it that he and all his followers who have left England for his sake receive all their belongings entirely and peacefully and honorably, such as they held three months before the Archbishop left England. Also have some of the more honorable and ancient knights from the prebend of Saltwood appear before you and see to it that they recognize by their oath what land they hold there from the fief of the Archbishopric of Canterbury. Take care too, that the Archbishop receive whatever has been recognized as being from his fief.

Given at Chinon, in the presence of
Retrou, Archbishop of Rouen.

Restitution was made to the Archbishop's clerics, although not sufficiently complete, but not to the Archbishop himself. The King, as was mentioned above, during his disagreement with Archbishop had disposed of some vacant churches of the latter. In accordance with the terms of the reconciliation he repealed these grants, and relinquished them to the Archbishop. The officials of the clerics to whom the Archbishop had presented these churches entered into possession. But soon after, they were dispossessed by the King's officials, and those to whom the King had given these benefices again took possession. Besides, at the next Michaelmas the revenues and rents from the manors of the Archbishopric were received, not by the Archbishop's

but by the King's officials. Many thoughtful persons silently reflected on these occurrences and made a note of them.

The Archbishop, grateful for the peace, had sent a messenger forthwith to the Pope and the holy Roman Church. He described to him the terms of the reconciliation and the concession of the King in regard to avenging the insult of the coronation. No doubt, the Pope was eagerly awaiting that messenger. Meanwhile the Archbishop was at leisure to express his gratitude individually to each of his religious and influential friends there assembled, and to receive from them permission to leave. The French nobles themselves furnished him and his companions most liberally with horses, garments, and everything necessary, so that they might send back with honor to their own land the exiles whom they had protected.

The Archbishop was receiving permission to leave from the King of France. With every expression of gratitude, very sweetly and affectionately he remarked among other things, "We are going to England to play for heads." "So it seems to me," said the French King. "In truth, my lord Archbishop, if you were to follow my advice, you would not trust yourself to your King since he has not given you the kiss of peace. Remain here. As long as King Louis be alive, the wine, the food, the wealth of France shall not fail you." He answered, "God's will be done." With tears they bade each other the last farewell. In

the same way, he remarked to the Bishop of Paris⁸⁴, as he embraced him, "I am going to England to die."

In England one of the officials from the court of the King confessing his sins to a certain religious and worthy priest, Richard de Halliwell, told him that with his own hands he had affixed the seal to the letters sent to England, ordering the death of the Archbishop, and that Nigel de Sackville, weeping, had written them. He added also that he had confessed this before to a certain English Bishop and had asked that a penance be imposed on him. That Bishop had said to him, "What for? You carried out your lord's command," and, as if he had done no wrong, he gave him no penance.

One day Reginald de Warrenne⁸⁵ entered the chapter of the Canons of Southwark, to whom he was closely bound by ties of intimate affection and by the bond of their religious brotherhood to which he had been admitted, as well as by the many benefits he had conferred on them. Among other things, when they were speaking of this corrupt world, of the malice of vicious men, of the vices, which, degenerating from the nobility of our fathers,

"This evil age of ours doth daringly commit⁸⁶"

he said to them, "I beseech you, pray very earnestly to God for

84 Mauritius de Sully, Bishop of Paris (1160-1196).

85 Reginald de Warrenne, son of William de Warrenne, second earl of Surrey, and opponent and persecutor of Archbishop Thomas, was employed as justice itinerant during the reign of Henry II.

86 "audet et apponit praesens corruptior aetas".
These words form a verse and are probably a quotation.

me, for I have need of it. Soon perhaps you will hear that something has been done in England which has never been done or heard of by this age. And as far as I am concerned, it is done against me and against my will. But I am not my own master. The Canons who heard these remarks were horrified. They were ignorant of what he meant or of whom he was speaking until at length the crime was committed, but by others, for Reginald kept himself free from the blood of that just man.

The English King in the meanwhile, by his cleric Hugh, wrote letters summoning the Archbishop and telling him that his delay in Gaul seemed a cause of suspicion to him. Therefore he should hasten to return to England. When everything was ready, the Archbishop returned to the King according to the agreement. First he visited him at Tours; there he did not ask the King for the kiss nor did the King grant it. The Archbishop did not ask for it lest he might seem too hasty and precipitate.

Again he came to the King's court at Amboise. That day the King was just about to hear Mass. Nigel de Sackville, the King's cleric and sealbearer, on whom the King had conferred one of the Archbishop's benefices, which he now feared he would lose, announced to the King that the Archbishop was in the Chapel, and that perhaps he had come so early, even before Mass, in order that during Mass he might offer him the kiss of peace. But if the lord King wished, he could cheat the Archbishop of the kiss.

"In what way?" asked the King. "Let the priest say the Mass for the faithful departed", he answered. The King consented and so it was done. After Mass, as was the custom, the Salve Sancta Parens⁸⁷ was recited in honor of Our Lady, Mary, ever Virgin. After its recital, the priest kissed the text of the Gospel, and he handed it to the Archbishop who approached and kissed it, and then it was handed to the King. After he had kissed it, the Archbishop said to the King, "My Lord, now I have come to you in your own kingdom. Give me the kiss of peace, according to the time and place and agreement." "At another time," said the King, "you shall have enough." This rebuff both the Archbishop and all who were present noted without comment.

The King and Archbishop conversed alone for a long time that day. However, in the final settlement of peace, it was agreed that the King would come to meet him at Rouen, pay all his debts to his creditors, and make satisfaction for the rest of the money taken from the Archbishop. There he would receive him to the kiss, and accompany him to England, or send with him the Archbishop of Rouen to his son the King, who would take care

⁸⁷ The words are the beginning of the Introit in the Masses of the Blessed Virgin, Mary; they are verses 63 and 64 of the Carmen Paschale, II, of Sedulius, "Salve Sancta Parens enixa puerpera regem"; they are also the first words of a sequence, "Salve, Sancta Parens, Rosa spina carens". See Rolls Series, volume III, p. 115, note.

of anything which might be lacking for the entire restoration of the Archbishop or his followers.

At Amboise, when he had requested for the last time license to cross and was parting from the English King, the latter said to him, "Go in peace. I will follow you, and will see you either at Rouen or in England as soon as I can." The Archbishop remarked, "My Lord, my soul tells me that I depart from you as one whom you shall not see again in this life." "Do you consider me a traitor?" "Far be it from you, my Lord," was the Archbishop's answer.

Leaving the court, the Archbishop came to Rouen in accordance with the King's wish. But there, through the messenger of the King, he learned that his only escort for his journey was the Dean of Salisbury⁸⁸. The King's excuse for not accompanying him to England was that the French King was preparing to attack his men at Auvergne. When the Archbishop heard from the Dean of Salisbury for what purpose he had come, he exclaimed, "Oh, how things have changed! The Archbishop of Canterbury ought to be furnishing you with safe conduct, somewhat more safe than you will furnish him on his journey to England." But to the Archbishop of Rouen, in whose name the above-mentioned terms had been agreed upon between them, he said, "What has happened to the agreement between the King and me? Why is the King not

⁸⁸ John of Oxford, previously mentioned.

present in his own person? What about our kiss of peace? What about the money? I have brought my creditors here. The King does not stand by his word." The Archbishop of Rouen, when questioned by the Archbishop of Canterbury, whether he had received a command from the King to accompany him to England, answered that he had not. However, out of love for him, he was willing to go with him if he wished, but it was not necessary. He added that everything was safe, as his peace and security had been made and established on such great authority and in the presence of such important people. The Archbishop of Rouen gave him three hundred pounds of his own money as a gift.

The Archbishop proceeded to the seacoast of Flanders, with the Dean of Salisbury, the above named John, as the sole escort of his retinue. The Archbishop meanwhile kept all these things in his heart⁸⁹, especially that the kiss of peace agreed upon in the reconciliation was not forthcoming. Nevertheless trusting in the Holy Spirit and unafraid to die for God and the cause of the Church, he advanced in the way on which he had entered. He had already been the recipient of a message and letter from the Pope exhorting him to return bravely to his church and fulfil his ministry. He also received a letter very severely condemning the presumption shown in the coronation of the new King, and suspending the Archbishop of York and all the bishops who had been present, with the exception of Bartholomew

⁸⁹ Compare Luke 2.19, 51

of Exeter alone. Besides, there was a letter imposing again on the Bishops of London and Salisbury the sentence of excommunication, since they at one time before had been excommunicated. A messenger was sent ahead with these letters of censure. He found the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of London at Canterbury preparing to cross the sea at an opportune moment. When they read the letters containing the threatening judgment of the lord Pope, in which this phrase occurred, "We shall fill your faces with shame"⁹⁰, they were overcome with dismay.

The Archbishop was now at the seaport, Witsand; the sky and sea were calm; the Archbishop's ship was ready, and other ships were crossing the Channel. Still the Archbishop waited. Some of his clerics, his fellow exiles, who were longing for their native soil, said to him, "My Lord, lo! We see England already. The sails of many ships crossing the sea swell in the wind. Why do you not embark on your ship? Shall we be like Moses, who indeed saw the Promised Land, but never entered it?" The Archbishop answered them, "Why are you in such a hurry? Not forty days will pass after your entry into that country that you will not wish to be anywhere in the world rather than in England." Now he was ready. Perhaps he had received a message that if he entered the port of Dover to land, he would find it in the possession of assailants lying in wait for him, men who

would accomplish the crime without delay, and that the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of London had gone to the sea-coast rather for the purpose of encouraging the perpetrators of such a shameful deed, in order that by their presence in the neighborhood and their protection they might be rendered more bold.

The good priest of God, Thomas, embarked on the ship and instructed his pilot to steer for the port of Sandwich, since that was his own port and his men would rejoice at his arrival. Therefore on Tuesday, the first of December⁹¹, he landed at Sandwich. On hearing of this, the King's officers, Gervase of Cornhill⁹², the sheriff of Kent, and Reginald de Warrenne, and many of their soldiers, armed under their cloaks and tunics, hurried to prevent his disembarking from the ship. When they saw John, who was escorting him in the place of the King, and had heard what he had to say, they withdrew. However, they were perceived to be armed.

But in order that something might be accomplished, the sheriff and Reginald, in the midst of their other remarks, asked if any foreigner had come with him, so that in accordance with the law promulgated by the King, they might demand a

91 A. D. 1170.

92 Gervase of Cornhill, sheriff of London and later of Surrey and Kent, sided strongly with the King in the contest with St. Thomas, died about 1183 or 1184.

passport from the King allowing his entrance into England or even an oath of fidelity to the King, Perhaps they said such things to arouse the Archbishop or stir up rebellion; but their attempts were fruitless in this instance. The Archbishop replied calmly that his entrance was a peaceful one, and none were in his party except men of peace, his clerics and domestic household. To be sure there had come with him a certain archdeacon of Sens who had conferred many kind services on him and his in their exile. This cleric he said was in his train. But exactions of this kind, such as passports or an oath, ought and were accustomed to be demanded from those of whom it was very probable that they had come to spy out the weaknesses of the realm. It was unheard of that such things be required from the clerics of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and they were not going to begin in his case.

In this way, the affair was settled, quietly, except that afterwards the Sheriff said to him that he had entered the kingdom with fire and sword; he wished to deprive the King of his crown; he had excommunicated the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of London for their service to the King, and in a short time unless he should take seasonable counsel about this something would transpire which would be better undone. To such statements, the Archbishop replied that he did not disparage the

young King his crown, since he would gladly have him acquire four such kingdoms if it were God's will; but he did take issue with those who against God and the dignity of the Church of Canterbury, had unjustly usurped the right of consecration. To exercise the justice due to the sins of the bishops was not to send fire and sword on the kingdom. Let no one threaten him with death, for he had come prepared to risk his life for justice and truth. He wrote at once to the lord Pope about his arrival in England.

The news that the Archbishop had landed reached the Church and city of Canterbury. Everyone in the town rejoiced, from the highest to the lowest. The exterior of the Church was decorated; the citizens clothed themselves in silks and rich garments; many a banquet, and generous feasts were prepared. The Archbishop was received with a grand procession. The Church resounded with hymns and the music of the organ; the halls, with the trumpets; the city, on all sides, with overflowing joy. In the Chapter, he delivered a very fine sermon, beginning with the verse, "We have not here a lasting city, but seek one to come"⁹³.

The two Archdeacons, Geoffrey Ridel of Canterbury, and Richard of Poitiers, intimates of the King and sharers in his counsel, whom the Archbishop had promoted to their eminent

positions and who were also his liege men, had already arrived in Kent, with the intention of crossing over from there to the King. When they heard that the Archbishop had landed and was then in Canterbury, they at once changed their course, seeking the seaports on the west. To many this journey seemed a bad sign,

The Archbishop of York and the Bishops of London and Salisbury through their clerics as messengers addressed the Archbishop, saying that he had not come in peace, but with fire and flame, trampling upon his fellow Bishops, uncited, unheard, and unjudged, and making them his footstool⁹⁴. They stated also that as his suffragans they had gone to meet him at the sea in order that, in procession with the Church of Canterbury, they might receive him; but unexpectedly and undeservedly they had been clothed with certain black garments, setting them apart, from which, if it should please him, they must be freed before they might come to him.

In his reply, the Archbishop said, "I see that the peace of sinners is no true peace. Until now during the days of my absence there were some of our bishops to whom these days seemed to be a time of peace; but a just war has been launched by the Pope to destroy this evil peace. 'A rule therefore should be sought for that may proportion punishments to crime'⁹⁵". Likewise

94 Compare Psalms 109.1; 1 Corinthians 15.25; Hebrews 1.13, 10.13
95 Horace, Satires 1.3.117-118

there is no true peace except to 'men of good will'⁹⁶. Jerusalem, abounding in luxuries and excessive self-indulgence, thought that she had peace; but the Lord in His pity wept over her, because the severity of the divine vengeance threatened her and was hidden from her eyes⁹⁷. The Bishops claim also that they were not cited, not lawfully heard; certainly not all things require a judicial investigation of the case. When crimes are manifest, they do not need investigation, but rather suitable correction. And as for this judgment of suspension or excommunication, this is not mine but the Pope's; nor is it our place to discuss his sentence. I well know that these things which the Bishops are demanding by their messengers are meant to try me and to trick me. If I confess that I have not come with the power of absolving them, they will esteem of little value my powers as Legate, lacking in this respect; if I say that I have come with this power, they will extort absolution from me by secular power. I am not tricked by them. They thirst for my blood. May they drink it; and they shall drink it!" Although in the end he gave sage advice for bringing them to their senses and making satisfaction, they did not consent but appealed. The Bishop of London, as it was reported afterward, wished to choose for himself the best part⁹⁸, so that as a penitent, having humbled himself and taken an oath to abide by the law, he might

⁹⁶ Luke 2.14

⁹⁷ Compare Luke 19.41-42; John 11.35

⁹⁸ Compare Luke 10.42

be absolved by the Legate and his Archbishop. The Archbishop of York, that he might not be left alone in the struggle, did not support him. Relying on his stores of money, he said that he now had the Pope and King in his power. He advised that they go at once to the King on the continent to inform him of everything that had happened.

The good Archbishop Thomas, after tarrying eight days in his see, sent a messenger to his lord the young King, to announce to him that he was coming to visit him as his king and master. He took with him three costly chargers, of wonderful swiftness, elegant stature, and graceful form; "high stepping with elastic tread"⁹⁹, with quivering ears and trembling limbs, standing impatiently¹⁰⁰, enveloped with trappings ornamented with flowers and varied colors, they were to be given to him, his new lord, as a novel present. For he loved him exceedingly, now as his king and lord, whom as a boy he had brought up in his home and court, when he himself was the Chancellor of the King his father.

The Bishop and Church of Rochester going out to meet him one day in procession received him with fitting honor. In London, he had his third procession to St. Mary's Church of the Canons regular in Southwark. There came out from the City to meet him on his return from exile, a great multitude of the clerics and of men and women, in great joy praising and blessing

99 Compare Virgil, Georgics 3.76; Ennius, Annales 1.67

100 Compare Virgil, Georgics 3.79, 84

God for his restoration to his native land, so long awaited. The poor scholars and clerics of the London Churches assembled and went out from the City about three miles to meet him. When the Archbishop was seen and was drawing near to them, they began to sing very loudly and joyfully the Te Deum¹⁰¹. Weeping for joy, they moved nearly all their hearers to tears of filial love. The Archbishop himself, rejoicing in their devotion and exultation in the Lord, with bowed head gave thanks, and putting his hand in his purse which contained his alms, he drew forth sums of money and had it distributed to them with great kindness and liberality.

At last he had arrived at the canonical church of Southwark, where he was received with hospitality in the palace of the Bishop of Winchester. When he dismounted, the devout canons went to the door of the church in procession to meet him with all joy, shedding tears, as did many of the people; they began to intone the responsory, Benedictus, Dominus Deus Israel¹⁰². The vast multitude there, clergy, people, every age, every class, took up the hymn of thanksgiving and mutual rejoicing with overflowing joy and resounding tones. There amidst the din, a

101 Te Deum Laudamus, hymn used in the Divine Office, and also on occasions of thanksgiving for some special blessing; (the tradition attributing its authorship to St. Ambrose and St. Augustine has been generally rejected by scholars.)

102 The Canticle of Zachary, Luke 1, 68-79, the song of thanksgiving uttered by Zachary on the occasion of the birth of his son, St. John Baptist.

foolish woman, shameless and talkative, Matilda, who used to frequent the courts and public gatherings, kept shouting and repeating many times, "Archbishop, beware of the knife!" so that everyone wondered what strange or treasonable thing she might have heard, what warning she was giving him, hidden under the cloak of those words.

After waiting for one day in the lodging of the Bishop of Winchester, the above mentioned Henry, he received on the morrow from the younger King, a messenger, Jocelin of Arundel¹⁰³, the Queen's brother, who told him that the King did not wish him to visit him, nor to travel through the cities and castles of the kingdom; but he should rather return to Canterbury and remain in his own see, and not leave it. The Archbishop was amazed, and he knew that such orders did not proceed from the spirit of that young King. He asked Jocelin if the King were intimating to him that he had been excluded from his good-will and confidence. The other answered, "His orders to you were what I told you." As Jocelin was going out, very haughtily, he met a certain citizen of London, a wealthy man, who was known to him, to whom he said, "Have you too come to the enemy of the King? I advise you to return speedily." But he answered, "We do not know whether you consider him an enemy of the King. We have heard and seen the

103 Jocelin of Louvain, younger brother of Adeliza, the Queen of Henry I.

letters of the King who is on the continent, respecting his reconciliation and restitution. If there is anything else hidden, it is unknown to us." Indeed these events were forewarnings of the troubles to come, before the event itself.

On the next day, as he was about to return to Canterbury, a messenger came to him to tell him that Randolph de Broc had taken possession of one of his ships that had landed laden with wine, and had cut the rigging, removed the anchors, killed some of the sailors, and imprisoned the others in Pevensey Castle. Immediately he sent to the young King the Abbot of St. Alban's and the Prior of Dover¹⁰⁴ to report the injury done to him. At the King's order the ship was restored to him.

Some soldiers accompanied the Archbishop Thomas as he was returning to Canterbury, lest perhaps, since so many signs of evil were transpiring and multiplying, some bandits might attack him from ambushes by the side of the road. There were in his retinue five soldiers in all, with shields, chargers, and lances. Immediately it was reported to the King across the sea that he was going about through the kingdom with a great army, fitted out with coats of mail and helmets, attacking the cities, and seeking to drive his son from the kingdom.

On the first evening of his return toward Canterbury, at Wrotham, there came to him a poor priest, William by name, a man

¹⁰⁴ Richard, Prior of St. Martin's, Dover (1157-1173), Archbishop of Canterbury, 1173 till his death in 1184.

devout in manner, who at that time said Mass at Chidingsstone. Having been admitted to a private audience with the Archbishop which he had asked for, he said to him, "My Lord, behold I bring you the relics of St. Laurence, St. Vincent, and St. Cecilia, according to the command of St. Laurence who appeared to me in a vision during the night, and said that these relics, which I have with me are the relics of these saints." The Archbishop inquired, "Brother, how do you know that these are the relics of these saints?" "My Lord, in my vision I asked some sign from St. Laurence, saying that otherwise you would not believe me, and blessed Laurence told me as a sign that recently you put your hand into your bosom and found the hair shirt which you wear next to your skin was torn. While you were deliberating whether you should have that one mended or should put on a new one, putting your hand in again after a little while, you found it whole." To this the Archbishop replied, "In virtue of the Holy Spirit and by the power of obedience I order you not to tell this to anyone while I am yet alive." The priest replied, "So be it," and added, "I am a poor man, and I serve in another's church. Think of me." "Come to me within four days after Christmas and I will provide for you." He then went away.

Randulph de Broc and Gervase of Cornhill, the King's officers, wickedly concealing their evil deeds and pretending to have orders from the King, had immediately summoned and cited

the priors of the churches and the more distinguished citizens of London and all those whose names had been listed secretly for going out to meet the Archbishop. They were to come to the King's court to give security and bail that they would abide by the judgment of the King's court, since they had gone in procession to meet the Archbishop, the enemy of the King, as these men called him. The priors and pastors did not appear. Many of the citizens, who had come on the day appointed, replied that they had not seen the letters of the King nor of the justiciaries which ordered them to be cited or to give bail. They were the King's citizens and faithful subjects, not their dependents. At the command of the King they would do what they ought. So things remained. For they had not committed any wrong in this but rather had they paid a fitting homage to God, reverence to their Archbishop, honor to their legate, as proper as it was devout.

The good Thomas reached Canterbury and those five soldiers went off to their own homes. He himself with only his priests, clerics, and domestic household remained there. The family of the infamous De Broc, his neighbors at the Castle of Saltwood, laid nightly ambushes for him all around Canterbury near the crossroads. In order to provoke him to impatience and his men to quarrels, they hunted in his chase without permission and captured a stag. They carried off the Archbishop's own hounds, foraging about in his woods, and kept them. Furthermore, Robert

de Broc, who had been at one time a cleric, and then a white monk, and afterwards had apostatized and returned to the world, one day before Christmas, waylaid on the King's highway a pack-train of the Archbishop bound for Canterbury from one of the estates of the Church under his management. To dishonor the Archbishop, he had the tail of one of the horses cut off by the hand of his own nephew, John de Broc. But Thomas, the ardent lover of God, "The chariot of the English Church, and the driver thereof¹⁰⁵", as patient in prosperity as in adversity, the dwelling place of extraordinary virtue, considered all these occurrences as tokens sent in advance of the martyrdom threatening him. Strengthening his soul for its departure from the land of Egypt, day by day he prepared himself, more generous in alms, more devout in prayer, more solicitous in the care of his soul. Several times while conversing with his clerics, he said that this conflict could not be ended without the shedding of blood, and that he would stand firm in the cause of the Church even unto death. His companions did not understand this, thinking that these were mere words. But afterwards those who witnessed the deeds recalled the words of such a nature. The Archbishop wrote to the Pope that nothing but death and the sword was in store for him; he besought him to pray zealously to the Lord God for him.

The Archbishop of York, and the Bishops of London and Salisbury and the Archdeacon of Poitiers (for the Archdeacon of Canterbury had encountered trouble at sea and had not yet arrived) were making their way to the court of the King on the continent. They met¹⁰⁶ him by chance as he was going to visit the Archbishop of Tyre¹⁰⁷. They told him the facts, which he had heard already, as has been said, of the excommunication or suspension of the Bishops. They blamed everything on the Archbishop of Canterbury; they ascribed to him the crime of lese-majesty, casting accusations at one who was absent and without defense. Indeed they feared this very thing, that he might at any time be summoned and given a hearing. In this respect they were more cruel¹⁰⁸ than the high priests of the Jews, plotting the death of Jesus Christ, since He was allowed to answer for Himself in public, but to His disciple, Thomas, not even this was granted.

Their case, I repeat, which was ecclesiastical, they brought to the attention of a secular Prince. By their complaints, they stirred up the King who confided too much in them, against the man with whom he had just been reconciled, against the Arch-

106 The text has obviavit, but sense seems to require obviant.

107 Frederick, Archbishop of Tyre (1163-1173).

108 The text has creduliores which is probably a misprint for crudeliores which the sense requires.

bishop, the holy man of God. The evils were doubled when the false report was brought to the King that the Archbishop was traveling through the kingdom in the company of a strong band of armed soldiers. The King asked them for counsel. The Archbishop of York said, "Ask advice from your barons and soldiers; it is not our place to say what must be done." At length one of them said, "Truly, my Lord, you will never have good days while Thomas is alive, nor a peaceful kingdom nor tranquil times." The King from this conceived such great indignation, bitterness and wrath against the Archbishop and showed it so in face and gesture that, perceiving his agitation and seeking to please him, four of the knights of his household, having taken an oath to effect the death of the Archbishop, left the court. They were, according to the report, Reginald Fitzurse¹⁰⁹, William de Tracy¹¹⁰, Hugh de Moreville¹¹¹, and Richard le Breton¹¹².

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- 109 Son of Richard Fitzurse, from whom he inherited the manor of Willetton in Somersetshire, was said to have gone to Ireland after the murder of St. Thomas, and there to have become the ancestor of the M'Mahon family.
- 110 A great grandson of Henry I through his natural son, William de Tracy, held a large estate in Gloucestershire and Devonshire. For account of his history subsequent to the murder see Morris, p. 587-591.
- 111 Justice Itinerant of Northumberland and Cumberland, was relieved of his office the year following the murder but records show that he held court again in the reign of John.
- 112 Richard le Breton, an intimate of the King's brother, William, inherited land in Somersetshire, where descendants of the family lived for several generations.

On the next day after these men had left the King's court, intending to kill the Archbishop, the King conferred with his barons in his chamber. He complained to them of the Archbishop that he had entered his kingdom as a tyrant; that he had suspended the Archbishop of York and all the Bishops and excommunicated others for their service to himself; that he had disturbed the whole kingdom and was trying to deprive his son and himself of their crown and diadem; that he had sought for himself with great diligence the honor of being Legate; that he had obtained for himself and the Bishops from the Supreme Pontiff the privilege of bestowing churches, taking away from the earls, the barons and even from the King himself, the right of advowson¹¹³.

The Earl of Leicester¹¹⁴ was the first to answer: "My Lord, the Archbishop and the lord Earl my father were indeed very close friends; but you may be sure that after the Archbishop withdrew from your kingdom and your love, he has not seen a messenger from me, nor I from him." Engelger de Bohun, a man grown old in evil days, the uncle of the Bishop of Salisbury, who, himself an excommunicate, bore on his countenance "the character of the beast"¹¹⁵, said, "I do not know how you can

113 In English law, the right of patronage of a church or ecclesiastical benefice, a right exercised by the nomination of a clergyman to such church or other benefices.

114 Robert de Beaumont, son of the previous Earl of Leicester who had died in 1168.

115 Apocalypse 13.17; 19. 20

take vengeance on such a man unless you bind him with wicker rope and hang him on a cross." William, surnamed Malvoisin, the nephew of Eudes, Count of Brittany, was the third to speak; "Some time ago," he said, "on my way back from Jerusalem, I visited Rome. Questioning my host there about the Roman Pontiffs, I heard among other things that a certain Pope had been killed because of his intolerable insolence and haughtiness¹¹⁶".

When these remarks had been ended, the King at once sent Earl William de Mandeville¹¹⁷, Seyer de Quincy¹¹⁸, and Richard de Humet, after those four who had gone into England. The report was that they were to seize the Archbishop. Earl William and Seyer went as far as the seaport but they did not cross. Richard, heading for another port, crossed. The young King was at Winchester. Richard sent word to his guardians, Hugh de Gondreville and William Fitz-john, to go to Canterbury, without the knowledge of the King, with the soldiers of the royal household. He himself lay in wait along the coast in order that the Archbishop might be seized if he by any chance should attempt flight to some seaport. The Earl William and Seyer did the same on the continent, to arrest him there if by chance he should succeed in crossing.

116 Possibly a reference to Lucius II who died February 15, 1145 A. D., reputedly as a result of injuries inflicted upon him by his rebellious subjects in Rome.

117 Earl of Albermarle and Essex, later, in the reign of Richard I, chief justiciar of England.

118 Lord of Buckby in Northampton.

A wonderful and marvelous thing now happened. For those four barons just named, Reginald Fitzurse and his companions, who had sought different seaports, under the leadership of the devil, the ancient enemy of all good men, assembled in England at the Castle of Saltwood, at the home of the De Broc family, at the same day and hour. However before their arrival the blessed Archbishop was informed very definitely of the imminent approach of his murderers, and he was more strengthened in the Lord¹¹⁹, acting manfully¹²⁰ and putting on the armor of God that he might be able to resist in the day of the Lord¹²¹. But he kept it secret, so that there might not be any disturbance on such a great feast, at least so far as it lay in his power to prevent it.

On Christmas Eve, he read the Gospel, Liber Generationis¹²², and celebrated the midnight Mass. Before the high Mass which he himself sang on the feast day, he preached to the people a beautiful sermon, dwelling long on the text, "Peace on earth to men of good will"¹²³. And when he was speaking of the holy fathers of the Church of Canterbury, of those who had been confessors of the faith, he remarked that they had one martyr Archbishop, St. Elphege¹²⁴, and it was possible that they might

119 Zacharias 10.12

120 Psalms 26.14

121 Ephesians 6.11,13

122 Matthew 1.1-18

123 Luke 2.14

124 Archbishop of Canterbury (1006-1012), martyred by the Danes.

have another there in a short time. Then he bound Robert de Broc with a sentence of excommunication for such a shameful outrage as he committed by mutilating the horse of a poor farmer in the service of the Church of Canterbury. He had already announced this to him, summoning him to make satisfaction. And that obstinate fellow sent back an answer to him through one of his soldiers, David de Rumnel, that if he were excommunicated, he would behave as an excommunicate. He included in the same sentence two others, the violent usurpers of the Churches of Harrow and Throwley, who had refused admission to his officers on their arrival.

On the feast of St. Stephen also, he celebrated the high Mass, and on the feast of St. John the Apostle and Evangelist as well. On that same day, he dispatched secretly into Gaul two of his clerics, Master Herbert and Alexander the Welshman, his cross-bearer¹²⁵; a third, Gilbert de Glanville¹²⁶, he sent on a mission to the Pope. Two others, Richard, his chaplain, and John Planeta, he sent to the Bishop of Norwich¹²⁷, with instructions to absolve at the appointed time the excommunicated priests on the estates of the Earl Hugh, who had knowingly celebrated the divine rites for those who had been excommunicated.

¹²⁵ Alexander Llewellyn, later Archdeacon of Bangor.

¹²⁶ Later, Bishop of Rochester (1185-1214).

¹²⁷ William Turbo, Bishop of Norwich (1146-1175).

First a pledge must be received from these priests that within a year they would go to the Pope or would send two of their number in the place of all to receive from the Pope himself their penance.

The Archbishop, mindful of his priest William, who had come to him at Wrotham, caused him to be sought out by William Beivin, who was acquainted with him, if perhaps he might be found in the court or city. As he was not found, he had a grant written in which he assigned and confirmed to him the Chapel of Penshurst, adding an excommunication if anyone should presume to take this from him. He gave that deed to William Beivin to hand to the priest when he saw him. Who will say that he was not aware of his martyrdom? By means of this deed the priest afterwards received his church in peace from the young King, who said, when he saw the deed and heard of the miracle, that he did not wish to incur the holy Archbishop's excommunication.

Now at the castles around Canterbury, Dover, Rochester, Saltwood, and Bletchingley there were already assembled soldiers who had been called out and assigned to guard those castles, perhaps so that, if the Archbishop and his men should choose to defend themselves by taking refuge within the Church of Canterbury, all that multitude of soldiers stationed in the neighborhood could come to lay seige to them¹²⁸. The purpose

128 Probably quicunque and expugnarent in the text should be read quacunq̃ue and expugnaret.

may have been that the good Archbishop, if he wished to flee, wherever he might come would fall into the hands of his enemies; or perhaps that if the citizens of Canterbury and the neighboring people out of zeal for God should wish to rise up against those assailants, to avenge his murder, those wretches either would have a refuge at one of these castles or, if defending themselves, they might ask for a garrison to be sent at once from these castles to aid them.

On the fifth day therefore of the Christmas season¹²⁹, the four knights of the King previously named with all their men and with the De Broc household came to Canterbury from the Castle of Saltwood. A number of soldiers were added to their party, whom they called out from the strongholds in the vicinity of Canterbury by proclamation, as if to the service of the King. With about twelve of these the four knights went directly and without disturbance to the court of the Archbishop. The others were to summon the prefect and older citizens and as if acting on the authority of the King, to command that all citizens, fully armed, should come with them to the palace of the Archbishop for the service of the King. If any citizens, marveling at their fury, refused, at once they should order them to keep themselves in peace and not to move, no matter what they saw or heard. This was their appointed task, either to secure the

assistance of the inhabitants of that city in their crime, or if not that, to see that they did not hinder them nor put up a fight on behalf of the Archbishop.

Those knights whose names have been given previously, and the soldiers, marching in advance, made their way into the inner chamber into the presence of the Archbishop. It was about four o'clock. The Archbishop had finished his dinner but the servants of his household were still dining. When the men entered, the Archbishop saluted them first; they made either no answer at all or a muffled one. They sat down before him among the clerics and monks. Reginald Fitzurse began in this fashion, "The lord King across the sea sent us to you with orders for you to absolve the bishops who were excommunicated on your arrival in England, to restore to their office those suspended and afterwards to go to Winchester to his son the King, whom you are trying to uncrown, in order that you may make satisfaction for such a great crime and obey the judgment of his court."

The Archbishop answered, "Indeed I did not excommunicate these men who were already excommunicated nor pass the sentence of suspension on those already suspended but the sentence was issued by the lord Pope, in his letters. In this way he corrects his sons and punishes those men deserving of evil. He sentences

the Archbishop of York, because while I was absent and unsummoned, without my knowledge or consent, to the prejudice of my Church, he usurped, in my own Church, the office of crowning the new King, a privilege owing to the Church of Canterbury and to me, although he had been forbidden by letters of the Pope himself. The Bishops are punished because, although they are suffragans of the Church of Canterbury and made profession to it, they allowed this, nor did they cry out against it in behalf of the right of their mother church. It is not my place to change this sentence of the Pope; the lesser power cannot free those sentenced by him. And yet although as Archbishop I have no power of absolving, nor likewise of binding, I obtained the concession that, in the case of my suffragans, the Bishops of London and Salisbury, I might absolve them from the anathema and that I might restore all the others who had been suspended, if they were now willing either humbly to ask for mercy or to abide by the judgment of the Church after security had been given. But those who came to me refused. Even now I am prepared to do this.

The coronation of the new lord King remains enduring, permanent and unharmed. While preserving the dignity of the one crowned, the Pope punishes the wrongdoing of the one who performed the ceremony because he who had not the power, in a place where he had no right, usurped the dignity of our office. The

Bishops are sentenced for their silence and for allowing it to be done. And all was done with the permission of the King, which was given to me on the day of our reconciliation. Nor do I seek to disinherit the new King; nay, rather, if it were possible, I would wish for him many kingdoms of the world, saving the right of their present owners. Recently I journeyed to see him, not to make satisfaction to him, for I offended him in nothing, but to offer my congratulations with fitting reverence, on the promotion of my lord. But at London I received a messenger from him and instructions to return, for which I am sorry."

Then those men broke forth into unrestrained threats. He said, "Truly I wonder that you so molest me, that you attack me with threats and evils. Do you know that the lord King on the feast of St. Mary Magdalen, restored me to his peace and favor? I saw some of you present there and as far as I knew, it pleased you. With the letters and passport of the King I entered the kingdom." Then Master John of Salisbury said to him, "My Lord, speak more privately about this," The Archbishop answered, "It is not fitting. They are proposing and demanding such things as I neither can nor ought to do at all." Then Reginald Fitzurse demanded: "From whom do you hold your Archbishopric?" He answered: "Its spiritualities from God and my lord the Pope; its temporalities and possessions from

the King." Reginald exclaimed, "Do you not acknowledge that you have all from the King?" The other replied: "Not at all; but we must give what is the King's to the King and what is God's to God¹³⁰." Reginald and the others, as if he had said something strange, raged and grew more incensed, and they gnashed their teeth at him.

But worthy Thomas, as a brave lion, was without fear, prepared for the sake of justice and the liberty of the Church, to suffer even to death for his soul. He declared, "In vain do you threaten me. If all the swords of England were pointed at my head, your terrors could not move me from the observance of God's justice and obedience to the Pope. Foot to foot you will find me in the battle of the Lord. Once a timid priest I went away; I returned on the advice and command of the Pope to my church. I shall never desert it again. If I am permitted to perform my priestly offices in peace, it is well for me; if not, God's will be done to me. Besides this, you know what there is between you and me. For this reason I marvel more that you dare to threaten the Archbishop in his own house." He said this, recalling that Reginald, William de Tracy, and Hugh de Moreville, while he was yet Chancellor, had been made his men by their own act of homage, saving their loyalty to the

¹³⁰ Compare Matthew 22.21

King, and each of them had received his law and command on their knees¹³¹.

This reminder, which should have calmed them, merely increased their fury; almost beside themselves with rage, they replied, "There is nothing between us against the King." Reginald exclaimed, "We can well threaten the Archbishop, and do more; let us go."

A large part of the Archbishop's household were standing there, together with many clerics and some soldiers, who had gathered in a crowd upon hearing the loud talking. When he saw these, Reginald said, "We tell you in the King's name whose liege men and subjects you are, to leave this man." No doubt these assassins within the palace were afraid that the members of the household might fight for their lord or rise up against them just as their allies in the city had feared that the townsmen might do. When all remained motionless, at once Reginald gave a contradictory order, "We command you to guard this man lest he escape." The Archbishop remarked, "I am easy to guard; I shall not go away."

Those assailants saw among the rest one of the soldiers, William Fitz Nigel, the Archbishop's seneschal, who had hastened to him from one of his rooms about some business matter. Having

131 Compare Horace, Epistles 1.12.28

seized him they carried him off, crying out, "Come with us." That soldier called out to the Archbishop, "Do you see, my lord, what they are doing to me?" The Archbishop answered, "I see. This is indeed their strength and the power of darkness¹³²." Rising up, the Archbishop followed them for a few steps, as they had not left the chamber, asking them quietly enough to return his soldier to him. But they, unyielding, withdrew, and meeting another soldier of the Archbishop, Ralph Morin, they likewise carried him off with them. Advancing through the middle of the hall and courts, back to their following, with terrifying looks and threats they searched into everything and shouted, "Arms, men, arms."

Meanwhile in the large house of a certain Gilbert, which was in the neighborhood of the Archbishop's palace, the entire hostile band assembled. At length when the signal was received, sallying forth in a joint attack they entered the Archiepiscopal gate which was opened to them and then closed. Shouting fearfully, they cried out, "The King's soldiers! The King's soldiers!" For some of their allies who were well known in the neighborhood had been secretly sent ahead and were already within the Archbishop's great door, to prevent its being shut at the outbreak of the disturbance. They removed the Archbishop's doorkeeper, and put one of their own men there, so

that no one from the city might enter to aid the Archbishop, and no one carrying anything from the goods of the Archbishop would escape. Before the closed door, since only the postern gate had been left open, was stationed on horseback within the court of the palace the above mentioned William Fitz Nigel, the seneschal and soldier of the Archbishop, now in opposition to him. There was also appointed to this duty Simon de Cricoil, one of the soldiers from the vicinity, who served the Abbot of St. Augustine's¹³³. Reginald, in a place apart, was arming himself in the very porch and he forced the Archbishop's shield-bearer, Robert Tibia, to furnish him with aid and service. That Reginald seized an axe from a carpenter who was repairing some steps.

In the meantime, waiting in the same room with the lord Archbishop, we were recalling everything, comparing their words and threats with the Archbishop's answers. We held different opinions. Some thought that there was no need to fear. "They were drunk when they came; they would not have said such things if they had not dined. It is the Lord's Nativity; and reconciliation has been made with the King." The others said that there was reason to fear that they would fulfil their threats.

133 Clarembald, said to have been intruded by the King as Abbot of St. Augustine's, was a bitter enemy of St. Thomas and had refused to make any profession of obedience to him. He was later ejected by Archbishop Richard, St. Thomas's successor, because of his evil character.

There had been many forewarnings of their cruelty.

Meanwhile we heard from the direction of the Church the sound of wailing of both sexes, of men of almost every age, grieving for us, as sheep about to be slaughtered, for they had seen the armed men in the city, hastening to the Archbishop, according to the proclamation. We heard our men hurriedly descending the steps into the church, fleeing through the middle of the palace from the face of the armed forces who were entering the court through the gate which had been opened to them. Osbert and Algar and some other servants of the Archbishop, when they saw that men in arms were breaking in, closed the hall-door and fastened it with a strong bolt. When Robert de Broc observed this, he began to batter down one of the walls with his axe. Having made an entrance there to the interior of the palace, he opened the hall-door to those parricides. Those who had held fast the door he cut down and seriously wounded.

We, the clerics inside with the Archbishop, also heard the blows of Robert de Broc tearing down the wall. How could it be otherwise than that fear and trembling came upon us, monks, clerics, and companions of the Archbishop? Lo, then was fulfilled the prophecy which the holy man of God had uttered previously, "In a short time they will wish themselves anywhere else in the world rather than in England." But that good Thomas

scorned death; seeing that it is to holy men the doorway and entrance to eternity, and to an everlasting abode, for him who thinks no evil. Besides the holy man conducted himself serenely, as if rejoicing that he had met with the honorable fate of dying for justice and the liberty and cause of his Church; and as if desiring "to be dissolved and to be with Christ"¹³⁴. So great was his love for the liberty of the Church that he measured it not by his death but by his resurrection and salvation.

Then the monks, of whom many were present, urged him, "My lord, go into the Church." He answered, "No. Do not fear. Most monks are more timid and cowardly than is right." They were not calmed. Some, taking hold of him, raised him up, and used force on him. Others persuaded him that he should go, reminding him that the monks were now saying Vespers and he would hear None and Vespers. Therefore he ordered the Lord's cross to be borne before him. One of his clerics, Henry of Auxerre, carried it. When they had entered the cloister of the monks, they wished to close the door after him. The Archbishop, displeased, would not allow this. With slow step he walked last, driving them before him like a shepherd driving his sheep. Indeed fear, which the love of God had driven out of him, could be seen neither in his movement nor his pace. It was as far from

his external self-possession as it was from the citadel of his mind. Once, to be sure, he turned his eyes to the right, perhaps to see whether those royal soldiers were close upon his track, or perhaps lest anyone left behind should lock the door.

They made their entrance into the Church. The monks of the church, panicstricken as well as astounded by so great a tumult of such unusual nature, had ceased chanting Vespers. When the lord Archbishop entered the church, they left the choir to meet him, rejoicing and giving thanks to God that they saw and received him alive, whom they had heard had already been murdered. And while some were weeping for joy or fear, others were urging this, others that, as Peter said to the Lord, "Be favorable to yourself"¹³⁵. He, unafraid to die for the freedom and cause of God's church, ordered them to leave him, undoubtedly so that they would not prevent his passion which he had foretold would be and which he saw was at hand.

Preparing to go up to the altar where he, with his household, was accustomed to hear his Masses and Hours, he had already ascended four steps when lo! at the door of the cloister by which we had come, appeared, first, Reginald Fitzurse

¹³⁵ There are no words of Peter, such as these, quoted by the Evangelists. Possibly there is meant to be a reference to Matthew 16.22 "Lord, be it far from Thee, this shall not be unto Thee", the words of Peter to Christ who had just predicted His passion and death.

clad in armor, his sword unsheathed, shouting out, "Now, this way! to me! King's men!" Not long after, his three companions, named above, joined him with drawn swords, their bodies and heads, excepting only their eyes, covered with armor. There were besides many others of their following and allies with weapons but not in armor, and some from the city of Canterbury whom they had gathered together and forced to come with them. On that day and for four days after, there were soldiers keeping guard at the neighboring castles of Dover, Hastings, and the others, as was said before; and at the seaports there were servants of the King; Earl William at Witsand, Seyer de Quincy and Richard de Humet, elsewhere. Perhaps the purpose was that the Archbishop, if he should attempt escape by the sea, would be seized wherever he landed.

When those armed men were seen, the monks, I repeat, wished to make fast the door of the Church; but the good man, having confidence in God and not losing heart with sudden terror at the onrushing forces of the impious, turned back and descending the steps, forbade the door of the church of God to be closed, saying, "God forbid that we should make the church of God a fortress. Allow all to enter the church of God and to enter willingly. God's will be done." As he was going down the steps toward the door to prevent its being closed, John of Salisbury and all the other clerics except the Canon Robert, William

Fitzstephen, and Edward Grim¹³⁶, who had recently joined him, anxiously looked about for protection, and endeavored to place themselves in safety. Having deserted him, some sought the altars; others, hiding places.

And indeed if the Archbishop had been willing to turn aside and save himself by the safeguard of flight, he could very well have availed himself of the occasion, not sought for, but offered by the time and place. It was evening; a very long night was approaching; the crypt was nearby in which there were many winding passages generally dark and gloomy. Also close at hand was another door whither he might ascend through a winding staircase to the chambers and vaults of the upper church; perhaps he would not be found, or in the meantime something might happen. But he wished for none of these possibilities. He did not turn aside, he did not implore mercy of his assassins; he did not utter a murmur nor complaint during his whole contest. But patiently, for the sake of Christ and the cause of the church, he waited his last hour which was drawing near. Until all was consummated, he displayed a fortitude and constancy of mind, of body and of speech, greater than any other martyr.

Behold, now those murderers, carried away by anger, perceiving the door open contrary to their expectation, entered the

136 A secular clerk, who later wrote a biography of St. Thomas.

church. "Whither, whither are ye rushing, to ruin in your wicked frenzy?"¹³⁷

"What madness was this, o wretched men? What fierce orgy of slaughter?"¹³⁸

One of them said to the monks who were standing with the Archbishop, "Don't move." Indeed those assailants, when they saw the Archbishop, retreated at first as if confused and overcome by respect for his countenance. Afterwards one cried out, "Where is that traitor?" The Archbishop, possessing his soul in patience¹³⁹, did not reply to that remark. Another likewise called out, "Where is the Archbishop?" He answered, "Here I am, no traitor but a priest of God. And I am astonished that you have entered the church of God in such garb. What do you want?" One of the murderers rejoined, "That you die. It is impossible for you to live any longer." But he said, "I receive death in the name of the Lord, and I commend my soul and the cause of the church to God and the Blessed Mary and the holy patrons of this church. God forbid that I should flee because of your swords, but I forbid you by the authority of God to touch any one of my followers." One of them had both a two-edged axe and a sword so that if the door of the church were barred against them, they might tear it down with axe and

137 Horace, Epodes 7.1

138 Lucan, Pharsalia 1.8. Fitzstephen used miseri instead of cives found in the original.

139 Compare Luke 21.19

hatchet; but, keeping the sword, he put down the two-edged axe, which is there yet.

A certain one struck him between the shoulders with the flat of his sword, saying, "Flee, or you are a dead man." He stood firm, unmoved, and offering his neck, he entrusted himself to the Lord; and he called upon the holy martyr-Archbishops, blessed Denys and St. Elphege. Some called out, "You are a prisoner. You will come with us", and laying hold of him, wished to drag him from the church, except they feared that the people would snatch him from their hands. Replying, "I will go nowhere. Do with me here what you wish to do, and what has been commanded to you", he resisted as much as he could. The monks also held him back, and with them Master Edward Grim, who, as he put up his arm, received the first blow aimed by William de Tracy at the Archbishop's head. By that one blow both the Archbishop and he were seriously wounded, the former on his bowed head, the latter on his arm. "Oh", as says St. Basil, "the fierceness of wild beasts grows gentle through the power of God; but human rage does not become mild by the example of wild animals"¹⁴⁰.

140 Perhaps a reference to the Liber De Spiritu Sancto 78: "...ut ratione destituamur magis quam ipsa animalia bruta; si quidem illa quae ejusdem generis inter sese consociantur, ut nobis atrocissimum bellum est adversus domesticos."

The Archbishop wiped the blood flowing from his head with his arm and when he saw it, he gave thanks to God, saying, "Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit"¹⁴¹. A second blow struck his head, at which he fell on his face beside the adjacent altar of St. Benedict. He took care or received the favor of falling in an honorable position, covered with his cassock even to his ankles, as if about to worship and pray. He fell on the right, as he was about to go to the right hand of God. Richard le Breton struck him as he lay prostrate, with such force that his sword was broken against the Archbishop's head and the pavement of the church, crying out, as he did so, "Receive this for the love of my lord William, brother of the King." This William had sought marriage with the Countess of Warenne; but the Archbishop had spoken against it, because the former William by his mother, the Empress Matilda, and the latter William, Earl of Warenne¹⁴², by his father King Stephen, were the sons of cousins-german. Therefore William, the brother of King Henry, grieved inconsolably; and all his people were hostile to the Archbishop.

The holy Archbishop received in all four blows, all on his head; and the whole crown of his head was cut off. Then could

¹⁴¹ Luke 23.46

¹⁴² The deceased husband of Isabel, Countess of Warenne; hence the impediment to the marriage was one of affinity, as the Countess's husband and Prince William were second cousins. See Morris, pp. 581-584.

one see how the body served the spirit. For just as he was perceived not to resist death in his spirit, so neither did he resist it by the opposition or the dejection of his body, since he received a voluntary death from a longing for God rather than a violent one from the swords of the soldiers. Hugh de Horsea, surnamed Mauelerc, crushing under his foot the neck of the holy martyr who lay prostrate, drew forth with his sword from the hollow of the severed crown blood and brains. O mournful sight! O unheard of cruelty of those who ought to be Christians! But they are far worse who under the name of Christian perform the deeds of pagans, than those who are infidels openly and through the error of paternal traditions. O truly happy and constant saint and martyr of God, Thomas! He could be killed but he could not be turned from his course.

And indeed as formerly when Christ was suffering in His own body, so now when He was suffering in His soldier, Thomas, the sun averted its beams, hid its rays, and darkened the day¹⁴³, that it might not see this crime. A frightful storm narrowed the heaven¹⁴⁴. Violent rains suddenly poured down, thunder crashed in the heaven. Afterwards an extensive ruddy glow appeared in the air, as a sign of the blood poured forth,

143 Compare Luke 23.44-45

144 Horace, Epodes 13.1

of the horror of the crime, and also of the swiftness of the punishment which was to come upon those who rendered themselves so fiercely savage, and debased themselves by this crime, who, destroying and laying aside all the gentleness of human nature, lived for the sole purpose of effecting his death.

So swift were their feet to shed blood¹⁴⁵; so impious their hearts; so fierce their eyes; so cruel their right hands; so bloody their swords. This crime affected all who heard and considered it, by its unusual nature, repelled all by the horror of it, struck them by its singularity, appalled them by its heinousness. The sons killed the father in the womb of their mother. Truly neither lilies nor roses are wanting among the flowers of the church; and in the passion of blessed Thomas both the gleaming white brain and ruddy red blood were drawn forth by the cruel point of the sword. There were assuredly true and most certain tokens that the shepherd of Christ's sheep, the Archbishop and combatant, confessor and martyr, who laid down his life for his sheep¹⁴⁶, was to receive from the Lord the two-fold stole, white, for faithfully administering his archiepiscopal office, crimson for happily consummating his martyrdom.

In life he displayed the simplicity of the dove in the innocence of his deeds, the wisdom of the serpent¹⁴⁷ in his

145 Psalms 13.1; Isaias 59.7; Proverbs 1.16; Romans 3.15

146 Compare John 10.11

147 Compare Matthew 10.16

holy prudence. He kept these same virtues also in death. As a dove, he did not resist death, he sought for nothing to hinder his murderers. As a serpent, he exposed his body to the assassins, his life he did not preserve, but his soul, as well as the church, he saved. Besides, through visions and forewarnings his death was revealed to many. Master Ralph, canon and priest of the church of London, a man of great worth, especially learned in Holy Scripture, seemed to himself in his sleep to be imagining a vision in the sun, seeing in the sun itself a Bishop adorned with the episcopal insignia. Likewise it seemed to a certain worthy woman that she saw the moon falling from heaven, and the whole orb was mutilated by the swords of some murderers.

The impious parricides, satiated by the blood of this devout man, which they had drunk, rushed out. On a Frenchman, a servant of the Archdeacon of Sens, who was lamenting the Archbishop, they inflicted a serious wound and left him covered with blood. In the meanwhile the others were free to plunder. They searched the whole house of the Archbishop; they rifled his chambers, and broke open his chests and book-cases; they seized gold and silver vessels, money, gold signet rings, papal bulls, books, precious materials from which copes, tunics and dalmatics were to be made for the adorning of the church. They entered the rooms of the clerics and carried off their garments,

books, money, baggage, together with all their household furnishings. From the stables others led away the horses, so that nothing of the goods of the Archbishop, his clerics, or his household was left, as it had all fallen into the hands of the plunderers. I estimate the value of the articles removed and carried off to be more than two thousand marks. Just as the crucifiers of Jesus Christ divided His garments among them¹⁴⁸, so too these criminals divided among themselves all this plunder. The privileges and Papal Bulls that were found they sent to the King across the sea. In this they were seeking to obtain the favor of the King; in all else they were faithless, treacherous and false to him. For all the possessions of the Archbishop, dying intestate, ought to go, if not to the Church, at least to the King.

O death unheard of! O crime accursed! Those murderers were more detestable than all other executioners of the holy martyrs. For the crucifiers of Our Lord Jesus Christ thought and said that he was a mere man, who broke the Sabbath¹⁴⁹, disregarded the traditions of their fathers, made himself out to be the Son of God¹⁵⁰, although he was the son of Mary and was thought by them to be the son of a carpenter¹⁵¹. Zealous therefore for the law of Moses, they hung him on a cross not knowing

148 Compare Psalms 21.19; John 19.23-24

149 Compare John 5.18

150 Ibid

151 Matthew 13.55, Mark 6.3

whom they were thus treating. "If they had known, they would never have crucified the Son of God¹⁵²". Wherefore the Lord Himself prays for them, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do¹⁵³".

Likewise the slayers of the other holy martyrs and apostles were not doing this against their conscience. The infidels, idolaters, and pagans slaughtered the faithful of Christ, thinking that they were pleasing God in this, as He foretold to His disciples, saying, "The hour cometh that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth a service to God¹⁵⁴". But those assailants were fellow Christians with St. Thomas, his sons and his liege men. They were fellow Christians, I repeat, in the Sacraments, but not in the grace of the Sacraments; his sons but the sons of perdition; his men, but devoid of all humanity.

Moreover, among the pagans and Jews there was great veneration for sacred places and seasons:

"...veto quisquam faxit oletum.
...pueri, sacer est locus; extra
Mejite¹⁵⁵",

is written in the literature of the pagans, for whom the sacred boundary¹⁵⁶ was an object of reverence and respect.

152 1 Corinthians 2.8

153 Luke 23.34

154 John 16.2

155 Persius 1.112-114

156 Horace, Ars Poetica 471. The bidental was a place which, having been struck by lightning was consecrated by a sacrifice and hence set apart from profane use.

The pagan also celebrated festival days and marked his birthday with the better¹⁵⁷ stone. The Jew likewise kept his sabbath and other festivals, and would not allow human blood to be shed within the city; for that reason the Lord suffered without the gate. But those ruffians slew the holy Archbishop with their swords at a most holy season, the fifth day after Christmas¹⁵⁸, in the holiest place in all England, the metropolitan see of the Church of the Holy Trinity, which was raised up under the protection of the many saints resting there, and in which there dwelt monks serving God. Such a person, spiritual father of the whole kingdom, Archbishop of the Church of Canterbury itself, Primate of all England, Legate of the Apostolic See, servant of Jesus Christ, imitator and close follower of the holy fathers, a devout man, "a strict adherent to virtue and watchful guardian of her rights¹⁵⁹", anxious to be good rather than to seem so¹⁶⁰, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, the abode of the holy virtues, was killed by such men, at such a time in such a place.

He suffered for this cause, for justice and truth and the liberty of the church. For he defended the laws of the church

157 Compare Martial 9.53; Persius 2.1. Lucky days were marked with white stones; unlucky, with black; hence melior lapillo, i. e., "with a white stone".

158 December twenty-ninth, A. D. 1170.

159 Horace, Epistles 1.1.17

160 Sallust, Catilina 54

and declared null and void the laws of the King which opposed these. Although he gave way for a time to the wrath of his earthly King, and entrusted the cause of the church to God, in a long exile and the fierce prescription of himself and his followers, he drained the chalice of many sufferings, he endured many bitter trials, overwhelmed by the adverse tide of innumerable circumstances¹⁶¹. No kind of punishment or adversity did he seek to avoid. At last in the seventh year of his exile, he was recalled. Reconciliation was made with him but the agreement was not observed at all. As if he were a prisoner, he was ordered not to leave his own see. There, after a few days, sought out by the soldiers, he offered himself, and as has been said, slain by their swords, he drank the chalice of martyrdom, neither heard in justice nor judged, for in trying him, no cause of death would be found. This they well knew who procured this death for him, envious of him, the sons of the evil one himself, brothers of the exceedingly cruel Herodias¹⁶², who in the same way had blessed John, the Baptizer of Christ, imprisoned, and afterwards beheaded, unheard and unjudged. What a happy event that he was adjudged guilty when we see him freed in such a way!

161 Compare Horace, Epistles 1.2.21-22

162 Compare Matthew 43.11; Mark 6.19-28

For a long time he lay there almost alone, abandoned by the clerics, monks and all the others; not even a light was brought as yet to his holy remains. Osbert, his chamberlain, with a knife, cut off a piece from his own linen shirt and with it covered all that was left of his mutilated head.

When it was ascertained that the murderers had left, his own clerics, the monks, servants and a great multitude from the city surrounded the holy Archbishop. The silence was ended, and all broke more extensively into groans and lamentations, which before, oppressed by fear of the murderers, they had restrained. They prolonged the weeping and lamentation far into the night. At length they placed the body of the lord Archbishop on a bier and bore it through the middle of the choir before the altar. They covered the open wound in his head with a clean linen cloth, and tied a cap over it. Even yet he showed sweetness and constancy of soul in his countenance. Again the weeping broke forth. Brother Robert, priest and canon of the religious house of Merton, a worthy man, who from the first day of his ordination had accompanied him as chaplain and inseparable companion, after commending the true devotion and worth of the lord Archbishop, which he as his confessor knew, among other things showed the monks that the Archbishop wore a hair shirt, a fact which none of us had known before. He put his hand into his bosom and showed them the hair-shirt next to

his flesh, and above the hair-shirt, the habit of a monk. Since he was abbot of the monks of the Church of Canterbury, although he had been chosen as a cleric, under the shelter of his garb as a canon regular, he lived the life of a monk of Christ and St. Benedict. Then the monks, made exceedingly glad by spiritual joy, raised their hearts and hands to heaven, glorifying God. They turned their sorrow into spiritual joy, their lamenting into words of rejoicing. Now they recognized clearly his twofold martyrdom, the voluntary one of his life, and the violent one of his death. They fell to the ground, they kissed his feet and hands; they called him St. Thomas, all maintain that he is a holy martyr of God. Everyone hurried to see in his hair-shirt him whom they had seen as Chancellor in purple and fine linen.

After a little, one of the monks of the church, Arnold, a goldsmith, and some others with him, returned to the place of the martyrdom. They very carefully gathered up in a basin his blood and brains, scattered over the floor of the church. In order that the place might not be trodden under foot by passers-by, they placed across it portable benches. The vigil of that night was devout, holy and serious; the monks said in silence the prayers for his soul.

On the following morning a rumor was noised abroad through the church that the De Brec household with their accomplices

were prepared to carry the body out of the church, grieving because they had killed him there. Fearing this, the monks made greater haste to bury the holy body and place it in the sepulchre. The Abbot of Boxley and the Prior of Dover were present at that service. They had been summoned before by the Archbishop, because he wished with the help of their advice to appoint one of the monks as prior, which office was then vacant in the church of Canterbury. They decided that he ought not to be washed otherwise than he had been, through being bathed in his own blood; and having removed and distributed his everyday upper garments, he was buried in that hair-shirt in which he had been found and in the drawers made of haircloth within and of linen without, in the same shoes and the monk's habit in which he had been clothed. Above these, he was garbed in those same vestments in which he had been ordained, the alb, which the Greeks call the podaris, a simple superhumeral, chismatic, mitre, stole, maniple; all of these he had ordered kept, no doubt for the day of his burial. In addition to these he wore the Archiepiscopal tunic, dalmatic, chasuble, the pallium with its pins, the chalice, gloves, ring, sandals, and pastoral staff. The custom of his burial was in accordance with the dignity of his position.

When the young King heard of the death of the holy Thomas, he was greatly grieved and struck to the heart. He raised his

hands to heaven and the eyes of his heart and body to God, saying, "Alas! But, O God, I give you thanks that this was done without my knowledge, and that none of mine were there." For these four unhappy assassins had accomplished the crime before the above mentioned Hugh de Gondreville and William Fitzjohn had come to Canterbury.

When all arrangements pertaining to the burial had been settled and completed, the holy body of the Archbishop, acclaimed with much weeping, was placed in the crypt before the two altars, without a Mass, since the church had been violated by the entrance of armed men.

Immediately after the burial service, in that very night and week, there was manifest the operation of the divine power, a worthy indication of such a great martyrdom. One of the citizens of Canterbury, who among the others was a witness of the martyrdom, dipped his linen shirt in some of his blood, for his wife had been a paralytic for a long time. She learned from her husband upon his return home of the suffering and constancy of the holy martyr, a story which she heard in a disturbed way because of the tears of those weeping and the confused utterance of those telling the story. When she beheld the holy blood on the garment of her husband, devout in her trust in the Lord, encouraged by her hope for health, humble in her prayer to the martyr, she asked that the linen shirt be washed and the blood

be received in the water so that she might drink it for her health. This was done and at once she was cured. God did this immediately on that very night as the first of the signs on behalf of his martyr. From this incident, I believe, by the inspiration of God, the custom resulted that some of the blood of St. Thomas was poured into water and that mixture of blood and water was distributed to the pilgrims of St. Thomas, in leaden phials, to be carried away for the curing of their own sick. I have seen inscribed on many of these phials this little verse,

"Water mixed with the blood of Thomas is carried
in these vessels."

And indeed through the power of God heeding the prayers of the faithful, and by the intercession of the holy martyr, and the merit of faith to which nothing is impossible, that mixture of water and blood not only effected the cure of numerous sick, but also prevented the death of some who were mortally ill, and I say more, but I believe reliably, that it was able to bring back to life some dead persons.

On Friday night, the fourth after his passion, it was revealed to a certain cleric in London, William de Capella, that a priest of that same city, who had lost his speech, should go to the tomb of St. Thomas, and there he would be cured. And so it happened. To one devout man in a revelation at night Jesus Christ was shown crucified in that part of the crypt where the

earthly remains of blessed Thomas reposed. That was indeed quite fitting because the Lord Himself suffers in each of His martyrs. He met blessed Peter going to Rome to martyrdom and to Peter's query, "Lord, whither goest Thou?" answered, "I am coming to Rome to be crucified again¹⁶³".

There was a certain lay woman, an anchorite, who had never studied, and understood no spoken Latin except some Psalms, and the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. While she was grieving much day and night on account of that recent martyrdom, solicitous and often rapt in ecstasies, she sent one day to the monks at Canterbury these words in writing, which were spoken to her by a very beautiful Lady who appeared to her in a vision at night: "Do not weep for the Archbishop; his head rests in the bosom of my Son." This was the beginning of miracles, so that God might reveal His holy martyr Thomas, since indeed he was a holy man whose life was distinguished by his virtues, just as his death, by miracles.

However, a large volume¹⁶⁴ has been written concerning his miracles in England, set forth on the testimony of priests and good men and related publicly in the chapter of the church of Canterbury; there are besides other miracles worked by St. Thomas far and wide, in Gaul, in Ireland, and all over the world, for which, entrusted as they are to memory, there is no one to write an account.

¹⁶³ Ambrose, de Basilicis Tradendis 13

¹⁶⁴ Benedict, a monk of Christ Church, Canterbury, compiled the records of the miracles at the Saint's tomb.

Meanwhile the De Broc family were always threatening by day, and taking their stand at night at the very walls of the lodgings in Canterbury so that they might carry off anyone speaking good of the Archbishop and drag him before their court. Hence the faithful did not dare at first to speak of the great works of God except in silence, until by the power of the Holy Spirit, the favor of cures and the concourse of the people so increased that charity cast out fear¹⁶⁵. The treacherous men, who formerly at the bridges and crossroads had forbidden them to visit him while alive or after his martyrdom was consummated, began to say, "We can do nothing. There is no counsel against the Lord¹⁶⁶. All England goes to him."

Certainly God, at that place, for the glory of His Name, and for the consolation of His church, and for the strengthening of our faith, showed that the innocent blood which had been shed, had cried out to Him from the pavement of the Church, for He glorified His martyr and justified his cause by the favor of miracles. The blind received their sight; for the crippled, limbs were extended and made straight; for the deaf, hearing was restored. Palsied limbs were made whole; the imprisoned were released, the possessed were freed. Many other infirmities, as

165 1 John 4.18

166 Proverbs 21.30

cancer, dropsy, ulcers, growths of tumors or suffocation¹⁶⁷ caused by tumors were cured. Within the first year seven lepers were cleansed there.

Moreover many dead were brought to life throughout England when upon their faces was poured water mixed with the blood of blessed Thomas, which the faithful of Christ carried back home in leaden phials hanging on their breast as a sign of their pilgrimage and as a remedy for their sick. In their own churches they suspended these before the holy relics, according to a certain divine disposition so that the glory of blessed Thomas the martyr might be brought everywhere and in every church his blood might seem to cry out to God for the liberty of the Church. And truly it befits the just judgment of God that where iniquity has abounded, over and above its excesses we may hear of the suffering of some apostle or martyr; and likewise in that same place the grace of miracles may abound¹⁶⁷ even beyond the glory of such a holy one through the power of God and the intercession of Christian faith to which all things are possible. That all these worthy and pious deeds are to be believed of the Lord's holy one, the authority of Jesus Christ confirms, Who said of His Saint, "The works that I do, he shall also do and greater than these shall he do¹⁶⁸". In addition, along the roads, in

¹⁶⁷ Romans 5.20

¹⁶⁸ John 14.12

the spots where he had stood while he confirmed the little ones who were brought to him, grace which produces virtues, was not wanting to the faithful of Christ, for there, out of devotion, the faithful of the neighborhood constructed chapels,

"Raised altars to him and swore by his name¹⁶⁹".

Those placed in the extremity of danger on the sea, who were saved by his patronage, returned to give thanks at his tomb, and left a token of such a great miracle and of their rescue.

That sweet soul of St. Thomas the martyr remained so affectionately, so gratefully in the longings and affection of all men of good will that, from the children who, playing together in the streets, relate his passion, sing his glory, perfect his praise¹⁷⁰, even to feeble old men, rejoicing that they have remained alive to see these great works of God, every age, every order venerate him, ask his help, have his love in their hearts, his name on their lips, his memory in glory, his glory in memory. He aroused to devotion toward God, a devotion which in the spirits of the English had long since grown tepid, and to pious desires of bettering their lives, of holy pilgrimage, and of giving alms, every dweller in England, both earls and barons, and the neighboring kingdoms on all sides. They were inspired by the example of his pilgrims, confessing their sins and removing their shoes, before they approached his tomb. Because of

169 Horace, Epistles 2.1.16 (slightly altered)

170 Compare Matthew 21.16

such a great concourse of both sexes and so devout an instance of His visitation, this one among all the great works of God would surely rank as one of the greatest. The man, full of holiness and grace, a martyr of God, most illustrious on land and sea, swift to aid at opportune moments, as it is devout to believe, is honored by God with more frequent miracles, in proportion as the greater malice raged in his murder. For the liberty and cause of the church, he, a minister of Christ, by Christians, though in name only, the Archbishop, by his sons, the master, by his liege-men, in the reconciliation that had been made with him, in his holy metropolitan church of God, in the sacred season of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, was cruelly pierced on the crown of his head by their swords.

St. Thomas, martyr, innocent in mind and spotless in life, is the companion and associate of the Holy Innocents. Slain at the foot of the altar of God, he is truly one of that company for filling whose measure the Innocents received the Divine response of enduring for a short time¹⁷¹. Therefore it was fitting that having been translated to the glory of the Holy Innocents he should unite his memory with theirs. Moreover concerning Our Lord Jesus Christ and blessed Thomas the Apostle and this blessed Thomas the martyr, one cleric with good reason observed, "Blessed Thomas the Apostle, who suffered in India,

¹⁷¹ Apocalypse 6.11

brought the light of faith to the East. Here blessed Thomas the martyr, who has suffered in England, has illuminated the whole West. Jesus Christ Who suffered in Jerusalem, illuminated the ends of the earth, Jesus Christ, the mutual light, 'the true light, illuminating all men coming into this world'¹⁷² as it were joining the extremes by a middle term. And that which holds in respect to the places of their deaths, the same consideration holds for their feasts; the Nativity of the Lord in the middle, the feast of the Apostle on the fifth day preceding, that of the martyr on the fifth day following¹⁷³. Around the time of the passion of St. Thomas someone published this verse of two lines:

"The year one thousand and one hundred and seventy-one¹⁷⁴
In which fell by the sword the Primate Thomas".

For the peace, liberty and unity of the church, and for the salvation of all the faithful living, and the repose of the dead, may he intercede with God, Who is victorious in His Martyrs, glorious in His Saints, world without end. Amen.

172 Compare John 1.9

173 The feast of St. Thomas the Apostle, 21 December; the Nativity of Our Lord, 25 December; feast of St. Thomas of Canterbury, 29 December.

174 St. Thomas died on 29 December A. D. 1170, not 1171. The anonymous author of this distich plays on the words primus and primas, but primus is an error. E. A. Abbott, St. Thomas of Canterbury, His Death and Miracles, London, Adam and Charles Black, 1898, p. 190, notes that all the authorities except Benedict and Garnier omit the date or give it incorrectly as 1171 instead of 1170. His explanation is that the death did not become widely known until 1171 and was associated with that year; also this short distich with its incorrect date would be more easily remembered than the correct statements of Garnier and Benedict.

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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Sister Mary Aelred (Sinclair), S.H.C.J. has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Classical Languages:

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

May 23, 1944
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